STOURBRIDGE
CHRONICLE

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BABY HOME

Little Harrison has left hospital

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WHO'S THIS

Arriving at prom in the Tardis

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ARCADE BACK TO GLORY DAYS LOOK

By Andew Turton

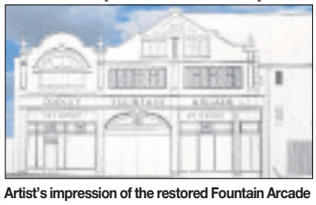
WORK has begun on a major £200,000 restoration of a town centre shopping mall to recapture its 1920s heyday.

Dudley's Fountain Arcade is the latest building to be restored to its former glory under a wider masterplan for the town.

Hidden architectural details have been uncovered already by the works on the arcade, which is locally listed.

The Fountain Arcade, which stretches from Tower Street to the market place, dates back to 1925. Many of it original art deco features will be restored.

Restoration plans have been made possible through Dudley Council's Townscape Heritage Initiative which has already revamped other prominent buildings in the town. Cash has come through the Heritage Lottery Fund, Dudley Council, English Heritage and the Housing and Communities Agency.



Artist's impression of the restored Fountain Arcade

Lost

Repairs to windows and stonework are already under way as part of the project.

Lost features such as blocked-up windows will be reopened and stone detailing to the pediment on the gable reinstated and installing new shop fronts is also planned.

In recent days workers have uncovered some 1920s architectural featuires which they are now repairing and revealing. These include previously covered-up leaded fanlights and elegant cream-coloured tiles, which were found under the rendering.

Trader Alan Caswell, who owns the Arcade Toy Shop, said he was delighted the works were under way.

"The end result will look superb," he said. "It is making Dudley look really nice and traditional and makes it look different to other towns and Merry Hill."

The project is due to be completed in autumn 2014. The building currently has scaffolding outside but businesses are open as usual.

Dudley Council's regeneration boss Councillor Judy Foster said: "The Fountain Arcade is the latest in a string of schemes that we are bringing forward to ensure that our proud architectural heritage is revealed and secured for future generations.

"At the same time we hope that improving the arcade will increase the number of customers who visit the shops and businesses within its walls."

400 extra places to be created at schools

PLANS to expand three schools to admit almost 400 extra pupils have been approved.

Dudley Council is facing a growing demand for school spaces and education boss Councillor Tim Crumpton has now given the go-ahead for proposals for 210 extra places at Sledmere Primary School in Dudley.

Under the plans bosses will also create an additional 105 places for Gig Mill Primary in Stourbridge and 70 for Kate's Hill Primary School. They would be available in September 2015.

Demand

The plans come as officers predict a surge in demand for primary school places over the next three years and they want to ensure there are enough available spaces in the borough's schools.

They are predicting demand for an additional 1,000 spaces.

Council officers are also considering providing extra spaces at Hob Green Primary School in Stourbridge, Howley Grange Primary School in Halesowen and Netherton Primary School next year.

Councillor Crumpton said: "Dudley is continuing to experience a consistent increase in the numbers of primary aged children requiring a school place."

Beach open at parkland

THE beach has arrived at Himley Park — all 120 tons of it.

A little bit of seaside will be created with a sandy beach placed at Himley Hall for children to play in.

The sand is left over from the popular under fives day held recently and is fenced off to make sure it remains safe and clean for youngsters.

Admission to the hall and park is free although a car parking charge applies.

Bid to restore war memorial

A GROUP working to restore a war memorial in a Dudley park back to its former glory has been given a boost after residents came forward to help with the project.

The Friends of Buffery Park is putting together a funding bid for work to be carried out on the memorial in Grazebrook Park. But they needed to know more about the history of the memorial and the park to include in the application and available information about both is 'patchy'.

Chairman Steve Briscoe said someone had already offered a picture of the site in 1945. Members have been searching for images of the memorial and park in the 1930s and 1940s.

"We will be starting to put the bid together shortly and we need to know as much as possible about the site," he added.

E-mail Bufferypark@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 07582 318472.

Tributes to comic Tommy

He made the Black Country loff — comedian Tommy Mundon from Halesowen

THE Black Country has been mourning comic Tommy Mundon, who has died aged 80 after a long battle against Parkinson's disease.

Tributes poured in from the showbiz world including fellow veteran comic Ken Dodd and Alan 'Aynuk' Smith who called him 'an ambassador for the Black Country'.

Mr Mundon,one of the stars of the Black Country Night Out, died on Monday morning at Mary Stevens Hospice, in Stourbridge, where he was receiving palliative care.

He leaves wife of 42 years Val, daughter Caroline and three grandchildren, Daniel, nine, Lucy, seven, and 18-month-old William. The funnyman from Halesowen was a regular on the comedy circuit for 50 years but he had to quit two years ago because of ill-health.

MP's joy as asthma inhaler ban lifted

A CAMPAIGNING MP has welcomed a Government decision to lift a ban on schools keeping spare inhalers, which she believes will save lives.

Margot James, the MP for Stourbridge, was among those calling for a change in the law to help children who could otherwise die needlessly from an asthma attack.

The blue reliever inhalers, most commonly used to treat asthma attacks, are prescription-only medicines and that meant schools were not allowed to keep a spare inhaler for emergencies involving children who did not have their own.

Risk

Charity Asthma UK says 1.1 million children with the condition across the UK are at risk because schools are not allowed to keep an extra device in case of emergency.

Having campaigned on this issue for the past 12 months, Miss James pressed Health Minister Jane Ellison for an update and was told legislation would be put in place with the law change coming into force on October 1.

Miss James said: "I am delighted that the government has listened to the concerns of local parents and teachers. The change in the law will come into place early in the new school year."

Taxis took over for train

RAIL commuters faced disruption when a shuttle train linking Stourbridge town centre with a railway station broke down.

The Stourbridge Shuttle was suspended shortly after 4pm on Monday.

Taxis were laid on on for people to get to and from Stourbridge Junction and the bus station.

By 4.30pm the broken-down 20mph train was fixed and the service resumed, said London Midland.

website www.wombourne-windows.co.uk

Wombourne 1st Windows

For more information see page 10

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Derelict chapel given second life

A DERELICT chapel which shut more than 20 years ago is set to be given a new lease of life as a venue for civil ceremonies.

Lye and Wollescote Chapel was built in 1878. But following closure in 1993 the Grade II-listed building has fallen into a state of disrepair.

However, following the sale of the building from Dudley Council to charity The West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust, £1 million in funding has been secured to bring it back into use.

A planning application was lodged last month and this week planning officers recommended it be approved when members of the development control committee met.

David Trevis-Smith, from the trust, said: "Our aim is to secure a use for the historic building – the idea of using it for civil ceremonies is excellent as it will secure the building's future for the long-term.

"There is a great amount of beauty about the building and it is much-loved in the community. We did a number of open sessions with the public when putting together the plans and we found people were upset about the building being closed and concerned about its future. Our work will retain the features of the chapel and we hope it will please those living nearby."

Under the plans, the Gothic-style chapel will consist of a waiting lobby and two reception areas. There will be a wedding ceremony room and an office for staff. A car park with 25 spaces would be provided, as well as improved disabled access.

Bid to cut council places by a third is scrapped

PROPOSALS to cut the number of councillors serving Dudley by a third has been scrapped after claims other authorities would have to follow suit.

A total of 72 councillors have seats on Dudley Council, three per ward. Opposition councillors tabled motions to cut this to 48 in a bid to save money.

Conservatives wanted the number of electionsin the borough reduced to one every four years in a bid to save around £300,000. A third of the borough's councillors are elected at each election to serve four years, resulting in local elections in three years out offour.

But Dudley's Labour administration voted against the idea saying that the authority needed to keep in step with other councils in the Black Country.

Technology

UKIP group leader Councillor Ken Turner had officially tabled the motion at a council meeting saying the changes would make vital savings. He also claimed three councillors per ward were no longer needed as modern technology meant people could contact their councillor more easily.

Conservative group leader Councillor Harley said: "UKIP mirror proposals that we had already put forward. We wanted the leader of the council to commission a report and call a meeting later in the year where we could vote on this and still have sufficient time to bring it in for 2015."

Dudley Council leader Councillor David Sparks said he was not against the principle of a cut in the number of councillors but said all metropolitan councils in the Black Country and Birmingham have the same system. "If there is going to be change there should be change in all of them," he added.

Fatal crash driver's bail is extended

A 32-year-old man arrested after a woman was killed when hit by car at a bus stop has had his bail extended.

Former Stourbridge student Rebecca McManus, aged 21, of Harborne Road, Oldbury, died at the scene on Hagley Road West in Bearwood from multiple injuries on May 31.

A motorist was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving.

He was then released on bail pending further inquires.

Last week police said his bail had been extended as investigations continue.

Miss McManus had attended King Edward VI College in Stourbridge before enrolling at the University of East Anglia in Norwich for an English literature with creative writing degree course.

She also worked as a publicity assistant at publisher Unthank Books.

Tributes were paid by teachers, friends and fellow students following her death, which was described as an 'irreplaceable loss' by staff at the university.

A second woman, also aged 21, who was with Miss McManus at the time of the crash, was also injured.

Fitness mission in motion

Dudley North MP Ian Austin with sport leaders Julie Robbins, Ryan Smith and Yasmin Winton

A PROJECT to get Black Country folk 'fit as fiddles' has been launched at a community fun day.

The Black Country in Motion programme, run by the Black Country BeActive Partnership and part funded by Sport England, is being launched this summer.

It puts the focus on particular areas to encourage people to get involved in sports. The Dudley launch was held at the town's Priory Park and featured tennis, a penalty shootout against Wolves mascot Wolfie and other activities. Dudley North MP Ian Austin cut the ribbon to signal the start of a run around the park. He said: "I am really happy to be part of what Black County in Motion is doing to help local people. It's great for the health and wellbeing of Dudley residents."

Simon Hall, Director of the Black Country BeActive Partnership said: "I am hoping that we have signed up some new participants for our activities."

Visit www.blackcountryinmotion.co.uk

Boss on £232k a year after £50k raise

THE chief executive of West Midlands Ambulance Service has been given a £50,000 pay rise, taking his salary to more than £232,000.

Anthony Marsh's salary is almost £90,000 a year more than the Prime Minister, £142,500. He splits his time between the West Midlands and East of England Ambulance Service, where he is also the chief executive.

NHS

Ambulance service bosses defended the increase today saying it was cheaper than the cost of hiring another chief executive to run one of the organisations full time.

Only a handful of civil servants in Whitehall were paid more than Dr Marsh's salary in the past year, one of whom was Sir David Nicholson, the former chief executive of the entire NHS, who was on £255,000 to £259,999.

Dr Marsh took over the East of England Ambulance Service at the beginning of the year but carried on with his West Midlands job.

Tom Watson, MP for West Bromwich East, said: "This man is probably the highest paid public servant in the West Midlands and nobody has ever heard of him."

Shopfitter is to shed staff

UP to 20 redundancies are expected at a shopfitting and interior display business with an operation in the West Midlands.

Two divisions of Alan Nuttall, which has a base in Dudley, are being amalgamated.

Human resources manager Sue Judge said: "We can confirm that a small number of redundancies are proposed due to the amalgamation of two divisions within the business.

"Applications for voluntary redundancy have been invited before moving to compulsory redundancies."

Red Lion ramble

THE Stourbridge branch of the Ramblers' Association is holding a four-and-a-half walk.

The walk on Sunday will leave The Red Lion pub in Bobbington at 10.30am. New members are welcome. For information see www.ramblers-stourbridge.org.uk

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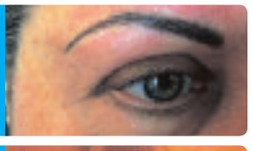

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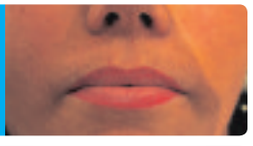

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Statue of poet in revamp of market

GINGERBREAD at eight old pence per pound, shabby strings and trousers wide enough for two.

The variety of items sold at Dudley Market has changed from 1827, but market life goes on almost 200 years later with a revamp well underway.

But council bosses not wanting to forget the market's past are to include a humorous poem by poet Ben Boucher on a new seat bench.

A bronze seated statue of Mr Boucher will also be cast on one of the two benches in front of the Grade II listed fountain, which is also being refurbished.

Lines from Mr Boucher's Line on Dudley Market poem will be inscribed on the bench, which will be made of the same Portland stone as the fountain.

Dudley Council lodged a planning application for the benches, which will be 13ft long and 4ft high. The work is part of a £6.7 improvement project to the market place. It is expected to be complete by early next year.

Councillor Judy Foster, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "We are using these seats as an opportunity to create something unique to Dudley."

Drink and drugs death

A MAN found on the floor of his home died from a combination of alcohol and drugs, an inquest heard.

Simon Bowen, aged 39, of Kingsway, Wollaston, had a history of depression and drinking, Dudley Coroner's Court was told. A post mortem revealed the metal worker had a combination of morphine, ethanol and diazepam in his system after his body was found at his home on January 22.

Senior Coroner Robin Balmain said, on balance, the cause of death was due to the effects of drugs and alcohol.

New dig at cone

A SECOND excavation has been launched at a famous glass-making site after an earlier dig uncovered the remains of two historic glass cones. Volunteers, including Amblecote History Society, took part in the excavation at Amblecote's Glasshouse College earlier this year.

Alcoholic guilty of arson at derelict pub

AN ALCOHOLIC has been found guilty of setting fire to the outbuilding of a derelict pub, which put the lives of nearby residents at risk.

Simon Glazzard denied starting the blaze at the Albion Inn, Wall Heath, on August 29 last year.

But a jury of four men and eight women last week took one hour and 40 minutes to unanimously convict him of one count of arson, being reckless as to whether life endangered.

The 38-year-old, who had been living in a tent near the old railway line in Wombourne, showed no emotion as the verdict was delivered. He will be sentenced for the offence, along with other counts of arson he has already admitted, at a hearing on July 25.

The other counts relate to September 9 last year when Glazzard set fire to four cars in the Wall Heath area using his cigarette lighter.

Glazzard gave evidence admitting he had been outside the pub on the evening but denied he had started the fire.

He told the jury he had been sitting on a wall outside the pub drinking a bottle of cider and had gone to the side of the building to urinate against a wall and remained there to finish the cider.

Glazzard also claimed he had seen two youths 'messing around' nearbut witnesses said they had only seen Glazzard outside the pub at the time.

The court was told Glazzard had a previous conviction for arson at a supermarket in 2002.

Glazzard had aroused residents' suspicions after being seen hanging around the pub in Albion Street.

He was seen to go to the back of the vacant building a short time before plumes of smoke were seen.

Fire experts told the court the fire at the pub had been 'serious' and there had been concerns about a nearby gas canister and the risk of the fire spreading to a house.

Blueprint to build homes on rail and canal corridors

DERELICT schools, a closed foundry and former college sites are among the target areas for new homes unveiled by Dudley Council.

Council officers have identified locations for 16,127 homes in the borough by 2026 to help tackle a housing crisis that sees 63,000 new homes needed across the Black Country.

In a development strategy released for public consultation until September 12, locations for the housing have been outlined. If backed by councillors, the document will be used by housing developers and planners.

Officers say 2,322 homes are to be started soon.

By Alex Ross

Identified

Over the next 12 years, officers have identified space for a further 10,971 homes, including 1,037 in Stourbridge, Halesowen and Dudley town centres.

A total of 1,511 homes has been allocated for Stourbridge and Brierley Hill.

The main focus will be housing on former industrial land along the canal network and close to town centres.

The Longlands Campus of Birmingham Metropolitan College could hold 34 homes. The former Lloyds foundry in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, could be turned into an estate for 80 dwellings. The former Stuart Crystal Works, off High Street in Wordsley, could provide space for 72 homes.

In an area covering Dudley town centre to Brierley Hill, officers believe 1,358 homes can be built. This includes the site of Dudley Guest Hospital , where there is room for 172 properties. Development proposals are already being put together.

Recently vacated Dudley Council office buildings at Claughton House, off Blowers Green Road, could provide space for 36 homes and the Steel Stockholders site in Pensnett Road could be turned into an estate for 135 homes.

Meanwhile, a total of 1,407 homes could be built in an area called the Jewellery Line, a corridor of land following the railway line between Birmingham and Worcester, which includes Lye.

A total of 24 homes have been earmarked for the former Holt Farm Primary School, 140 at Caledonia Sewage Works and 10 for Springfield Works in Pearson Street, Lye.

Driver is taken to hospital

A MOTORIST was taken to hospital after a two-car smash on Saturday.

Fire crews from Stourbridge and Oldbury were called to the crash in Windmill Hill, Halesowen, at around 4pm. The woman driver of a Landrover was taken to Russells Hall Hospitalto be treated for back pain. Watch commander Brian Morris said: "We had to take the roof off a Landrover which had gone into the back of a Ford Fiesta."

Five-month-old Harrison Jordan at home with mother Melanie and father Tim

Family's joy over their 'little fighter'

THEY call him their little fighter — an apt name for a tiny boy who has defied the odds.

Born on February 3, 11 weeks early, and weighing just one-and-a-half pounds, Harrison Jordan's life was touch and go during his early days. In the first months of Harrison's life, he called Russells Hall, New Cross and Birmingham Children's Hospitals home.

Twice his parents Melanie and Tim said their goodbyes and had him blessed by the hospital chaplain as they feared the worst.

Now the youngster, as small as a £10 note when born, is back at home in Kingswinford and getting stronger, last week weighing in at 7 lbs five oz.

Surrounded by family and friends, Harrison has been christened. "It was amazing, and very emotional," said Melanie, 40. "It felt like we would never get to that point with Harrison. We always had hope but he was such a poorly little boy. So it was a really happy day."

The ceremony was held at The Church of the Ascension in Wall Heath, with a celebration at the Kingfisher Hotel where Melanie and Tim married six years ago.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MP backs firms who help young

A SCHEME recognising firms which support young people has been welcomed by Dudley South MP Chris Kelly.

He is backing the Youth Friendly Badge initiative. The aim of the badge is to recognise those UK employers who engage with young people.

Mr Kelly said: "I welcome this initiative to help young people. Although youth unemployment has started to decrease, I support any scheme that will help to build a sustainable future for people in Dudley and the Black Country."

Youth band are in concert at fun day

A YOUTH band which wowed the crowds during celebrations of Black Country Day are tuning up for their next performance.

The Coseley Comets will entertain residents at East Coseley Fun Day on August at Clayton Park, in Old Meeting Road, between 1pm and 5pm.

There will be stalls, community groups and services.

Anyone interested in joining should visit www.thecometsymb.co.uk or call 07720 757074

Brazil date for skillful student

A BLACK Country UTC student is flying the flag for vocational education in the West Midlands after being confirmed as a UK Squad member for next year's WorldSkills competition in Brazil.

Engineering student Hayley Ramadhar is one of 98 young people to land a spot in the prestigious squad, offering the chance to compete at WorldSkills in Sao Paulo next year.

Wall collapses after downpour

URGENT repair work was being carried out on a brick wall which collapsed after heavy downpours at the weekend.

A public footpath had to be shut after part of the wall collapsed in Old Hill, leaving a gaping hole.

Bricks lay across the floor of the ruined wall in Stacey Close, in Old Hill, on Saturday.

Barrister chosen

BARRISTER Ayoub Khan has been chosen by the Liberal Democrats to contest the by-election to succeed West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Bob Jones, who died suddenly this month.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

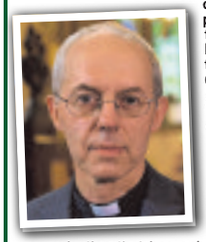
IN theory, six penalty points for using a mobile phone while driving, as proposed by Whitehall last week, will be a huge deterrent. In real life, what sort of deterrent will it take to make the woman I saw the other day think twice? She was texting while driving – in a convertible with the hood down. Bold as brass which, strangely enough, was the colour of her hair.

AH, the wisdom of age. An 85-year-old granny in Brighton has become one of the oldest British drivers to be convicted, fined and banned for driving over the limit. Does she express remorse? Does she urge younger people to be warned by her example? Does she even apologise? Nah. Granny tells the world: "I can have one drink and it will have no effect on me whatsoever. I know what my limit is. I don't think I have done anything wrong." Honestly, the old people of today . . .

THANKS for your emails on things your moggies have dragged through the cat flap. Strangest so far are the "mole salad," which was delivered with a big bunch of grass, and a whole plaice.

WASN'T it pitiful, hearing the independence tendency on Any Questions (Radio 4) trying to convince Scots that if they voted to leave the UK, Whitehall would carry on awarding Royal Navy contracts to shipyards in Scotland, which would then be a foreign country? Can you really see any English politician campaigning under the banner "British jobs for Scottish workers"?

I HATE to be a party-pooper amid all the champagne corks popping and tears of joy over the vote to appoint women bishops. But, seriously, does anyone believe that men would have surrendered the Church of England to women so feebly if it were worth holding on to? Throughout history men have loved power. That is why the institutions that really matter and have real power, Parliament, the law, the armed forces, the City and most professions, are still firmly in male control. The Church has been handed over to women because in a Godless age it is dying on its feet, utterly irrelevant and has about as much power and influence on society as Jackanory. The ordaining of women bishops is the last dying gasp of a clapped-out organisation that has only a few years left. They know it. We know it.



BUT has anyone told the Devil? The General Synod has adopted a new form of baptism which makes no mention of him. This is frankly ungrateful. For centuries, the Devil was the Church's biggest fundraiser. Generations of our ancestors, frightened out of their skins, handed a tenth of their income over to the Church to save them from the Devil and his fiery domain. Now that the Church is admitting in effect that he never existed, can we have our money back? That's a few million groats and sovereigns, plus compound interest for, say, 1,000 years. A million quid for every citizen should just about cover it.

I HONESTLY don't know whether it's worthwhile, or even cost-effective, to spend millions of pounds of NHS money stapling up the stomachs of the obese, It just seems strange. The NHS is at its best when it prevents illness rather than dealing with the consequences. It has helped millions of people give up smoking or take blood-pressure medication before strokes or heart attacks occur. So where's the pro-active anti-obesity programme? It is hardly a mystery what causes this condition. Plague is transmitted by fleas. Colds are transmitted by a virus. Obesity is transmitted by chips.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Tributes are paid to popular journalist

A HUGELY popular sub-editor who worked at the Express & Star for 16 years has died.

Emma Farmer, 45, worked on the Wolverhampton Magazine and was previously the newspaper's features editor.

She died on July 10 having been suddenly taken seriously ill the week before while fishing with her partner, Stan Talbot, 63, to mark her birthday. Mr Talbot, of Hammerwich, said: "She had just caught the biggest carp either of us had ever seen. She'd sometimes say 'come and help me with this' but this time she said she wasn't feeling well. Then she collapsed."

Miss Farmer had suffered a sub-arachnoid haemorrhage, a type of stroke. She underwent emergency surgery but nothing more could be done to save her. Mr Talbot, a builder, paid tribute to his partner of two years. He said: "Emma loved life and she loved people."

Miss Farmer was a keen athlete in her youth, competing in hurdling. She grew up in East Riding in Yorkshire, one of two daughters born to parents Colin and Pat. She joined the Express & Star in 1998, after working for the Press Association.

Express & Star editor Keith Harrison said: "Emma was a hugely popular and talented member of the team." Columnist Peter Rhodes, who worked with Emma for more than a decade, said: "She had a wonderfully dry north country sense of humour and she will be terribly missed."

The funeral at Streetly Crematorium is tomorrow (Friday),11.15am.

Pub and chip shop to boost museum funds

CHIPS and beer are at the forefront of the Black Country Living Museum's plans to increase revenue to fund investment at the Tipton Road site.

Around 240,000 people visited the Black Country Living Museum during 2013, continuing a downward trend since 2009. This led to the heritage museum in Dudley making a loss of around £15,000.

But museum bosses say they are optimistic as this was much better than losses of £300,000 the previous year.

Target

Bosses have set a target of 254,000 visitors in 2014 to break-even and aim to earn more income through the museum's famous fish and chips and its pub,The Bottle and Glass.

Museum director and chief executive Andrew Lovett said problems with high running costs at the attraction had been 'fixed' and he was confident visitor numbers would rise.

It comes after the museum, near Castle Hill, heard earlier this month that it will receive a £2,658,000 grant from Arts Council England.

Mr Lovett said: "Although we need and gets lots of support with large developments at the museum and to allow us to do special projects, we rely on our own efforts to attract paying visitors to meet our everyday costs – amounting to about

By Andrew Turton

£4 million each year. To do this in 2014 we need to welcome a little over 250,000 visitors. It's what many businesses would call their break-even point."

The museum revealed it made a loss of £15,491 but this was an 'enormously positive improvement' on the year before.

"Our costs were too high," said Mr Lovett. "And although we have fixed that issue, we want to attract an ever-increasing number of visitors and to earn more income from things like our fish and chip shop, baker's, pub and our gift shop, so that we can invest in the site and continue to provide a really special visit."

Museum bosses say they were also helped after Government ministers axed proposed changes to the school curriculum that could have resulted in a fall in the number of school bookings. Proposals have been tabled to create a schools' reception centre at the museum.

Teacher of the year award

A EDUCATOR from Dudley has been praised for her outstanding contribution to children's literacy after being named Teacher of the Year 2014 for the Midlands.

Susan Clarke, a teacher at Netherbrook Primary School in Chester Road, Netherton, won the award for her work through the Institute of Education's Reading Recovery programme.

Mrs Clarke said: "The pride which accompanies this intervention is always there and always gratifying, especially when you can provide statistics which demonstrate improved reading ages, rates and comprehension skills."

Who's the belle of the ball

Student Jade Wootton, 16, with her brother Jerome Wootton, 18, and their Tardis

WITH her flowing locks and a stunning dress in Tardis blue, Jade Wootton looks like the perfect travelling companion for any discerning Time Lord.

The 16-year-old arrived in style for her end-of-school prom, materialising in a replica of the famous time machine from Doctor Who.

While friends opted for sports cars and limousines, Jade stepped out of the blue box for Dormston School's prom at Ramada Park Hall Hotel in Wolverhampton.

Instead of gliding through time and space, her Tardis was carried on the back of a truck driven by her father, Paul, aged 49.

Mr Wootton bought the Tardis from the BBC for £300 last year. It is believed the box was used for filming classic episodes in the 1980s. Mr Wootton had to replace the windows, roof and side to the box, along with giving it a fresh lick of dark blue paint. The family, of Barley Close, say they plan to use the Tardis to rent out for children's parties, birthday events and weddings.

Parish step in to save the library for village

A LIBRARY has been saved from closure after lans for the service to be retained in the village were drawn up.

Hagley Parish Council will step in to take over the building's running and management costs whilst Worcestershire County Council will continue to provide the service with the help of volunteers.

It is hoped Hagley Library would move to a proposed 'community hub' in the village at a later date

There had been fears the village library could close and be replaced with a mobile service as part of county council plans to shave £1.9million of budgets over the next three years.

Chairman of Hagley Parish Council Steve Colella, who described the library as an 'essential' service, said: "I am pleased we have come to a position both parties are comfortable with. We are going to retain the same level of service we currently have and if we can increase it in the future we will do."

The county cabinet member for communities Councillor Lucy Hodgson said in a report going before the county's cabinet: "Subject to cabinet approval, the parish council will take control of the building at the end of September 2014."

Inn stays open despite threat

A PUB manager says trade is flourishing at his business — despite plans to pull the pub down.

Simon Giles took over The Yew Tree Inn, in Hockley Lane, Netherton in January. After introducing a range of real ales and carrying out a make-over, Mr Giles said trade was going well. The pub is organising a charity event for Help For Heroes in August.

Horgan Homes last week submitted an application to replace the pub with five homes. Outline plans to replace the pub were given the go-ahead in December.

Road disruption

MOTORISTS will face disruption as road works and closures start on Quarry bank High Street on Monday and last for two weeks.

Work on the A4100 will take place between the roundabout at Park Road and the Dudley borough boundary at Cradley Forge.

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£1m plan to boost Brierley Hill buses

A £1.2 million scheme to improve bus services and roads in Brierley Hill has started.

As part of the project a crossing will be created on the A4036 Pedmore Road.

Bus priority measures will be introduced along The Boulevard, the main connecting road between Merry Hill Shopping Centre and Brierley Hill High Street, in a bid to improve bus services.

Work is being carried out by Dudley Council on behalf of Centro, the region's transport authority. It is being funded by a multi-million pound grant from the Government's Better Bus Area Fund.

Centro received £5m, the maximum amount, and this has been supplemented by £5m from other sources.

Councillor John McNicholas, chairman of Centro, said: "The money we have received from the fund will result in many newer, more modern buses coming into operation in the Brierley Hill area. The highway improvements we are making will help ensure better journey times and increased reliability."

Council transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, said it would be a boost for the local economy.

Sudden surge in 999 calls

MORE people than ever are phoning 999 in the West Midlands – leading to bosses implementing an action plan to cope.

Training was cancelled and staff holidays restricted as ambulance staff moved to cope with a 'massive increase' in demand.

Successive weekends in June saw rises of 12, 13 and 15 per cent in calls, compared to a year earlier.

Chiefs said the demand was only comparable with weekends when there had been heavy snow.

Bosses say there is no particular reason for the increase.

Cafe ransacked

THE tea room at Baggeridge Country Park was broken into last week.

Manager Dave Daly said it had cost the cafe £1,000 in total through money stolen from the till and damage to the building. A fire door was removed from its hinges and the room was vandalised.

Ambulance driver is spared roads ban

Lee Wooden — spared ban

AN AMBULANCE driver who admitted travelling at 90mph along a 50mph road has avoided a ban after magistrates heard he would lose his job if unable to drive.

Lee Woodend, of Bilston, was driving his blue Vauxhall Astra car along the A456 Hagley Hill on March 15 when he was clocked by a PCSO on speed check duty.

Kidderminster Magistrates Court heard a reading from a laser device showed the car travelling at 90mph – 40mph faster than the road's speed limit.

The 31-year-old, who works as an ambulance driver for Lifeskills Medical UK, was stopped by an office. He had immediately apologised for the offence.

Risk

Woodend, of Greenway Road, pleaded guilty to one charge of driving in excess of the 50mph speed limit at last week's hearing.

He received three points, a £500 fine and ordered to pay £60 costs and a £50 victim surcharge.

The court was told he already had three points on his licence and was at risk of being banned.

Mr Geoff Murphy, prosecuting, said: "A PCSO was on duty along the road carrying out speed checks. At around 11.18am his attention was attracted by a blue Astra car. He took a reading with a laser device which showed the car travelling at a speed of 90mph. The PCSO gave the information to a colleague on patrol further up the road and the defendant was stopped."

Mr Michael Trevelyan, defending Woodend, said: "My client knows he has been stupid. Visibility on the day was excellent and this is not a road where there is likely to be many pedestrians around.

"He is frontline ambulance driver, a public servant responding to both emergency and non-emergency calls. To be able to continue that public service he needs to still be in a position to drive."

Magistrates said Woodend should have known better but agreed not to ban him so he could continue his work.

Major new funding boost for canal Portal project

PLANS for a canalside visitor attraction in Dudley have been given a further £100,000 boost.

Dudley Canal Trust is celebrating after receiving the latest grant fromThe Garfield Weston Foundation. The money will go towards financing a new visitor and heritage centre.

Construction of the building is set to start before the end of the year and the Todd's End site, off Birmingham New Road, will house a new education and visitors centre called The Portal.

This will provide facilities for schools, community groups and the public to discover the Black Country's canal heritage.

Bosses say total cost of the redevelopment project is expected to be £3 million and it is hoped that the building will be open next Easter.

Mike Duley, Chair of the Project Steering Group for the Portal Project, said the latest grant will make a vital difference to the project.

"This latest contribution to our project, from the Garfield Weston Foundation, is a vital addition to our fundraising," he said. "The Portal would simply not be possible without our generous funders."

The Portal will enhance the connection between Dudley Canal and Limestone Mines and the Castle Hill Development Project, including the Black County Living Museum, giving visitors opportunities to explore both sites.

Dudley Canal Trust was established in 1970 to protect and preserve the network of underground canal tunnels beneath Dudley and the £3m project will also see a new swing bridge linking the canalside attraction to the Black Country Living Museum.

Town Hall is closed for a £25k revamp

DUDLEY Town Hall is closed for four more weeks as work takes place on a £25,000 refurbishment project.

The council said it was shutting the main hall during its quieter period to renovate the venue ahead of its busy autumn programme.

The venue in St James's Road will welcome acts including comics John Bishop, Jasper Carrott and Jimmy Tarbuck later this year.

Work being carried out includes sanding and sealing the dance floor and plastering and painting work in the hall and bar. The banqueting hall will remain open during the revamp.

Councillor Hilary Bills, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "Dudley Town Hall is a premier entertainments venue for the borough and we are investing in the landmark building to bring it up to the standard people expect.

"It is essential we close part of the hall for five weeks during this important work, and we apologise to anyone hoping to book during this period."

Perfect time for head to bow out

Pupils Ellie Kovaks and Naomi Broni-Phillipswith gifts for retiring headteacher Lucy Griffiths at Jesson's Primary

AFTER more than 20 years at the helm of a growing primary school, Lucy Griffiths is retiring 21 years after joining Jesson's Primary School in Dudley as headteacher.

Since taking on the role she has overseen the growth of the school in School Street from 500 to 600 pupils and the building of new classrooms and playground.

She came to the school, which is more than 150 years old, after a three-year spell as deputy at Priory Primary School in Dudley

On looking back over her time at Jesson's, mother-of-one Mrs Griffiths says her proudest achievements at the school are the inspection results and musical education she brought in. Every child learns an instrument and many are in the school's choirs.

The school received another good Ofsted report last month which Mrs Griffiths saw as a 'perfect moment' to bow out from the school, which was founded as a charity school, then for boys only, by boot and shoe maker John Williams Jesson.

Mrs Griffiths, who lives in Kinver, said: "We encourage all our children to learn a music instrument, I think it is good because it provides them with confidence to perform and the mind set to always improve and not give up — skills they can take later on into their lives. That has been important to me, as well as the academic success of the children and the progression of the school."

Helen George takes over as acting head before Sarah Lee will becomes permanent headteacher in January.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New bosses for Kiddicare chain

THE Kiddicare baby and nursery supplies chain, which has a store at Merry Hill Retail Park in Brierley Hill, has changed hands.

The Morrisons supermarket chain has sold Kiddicare for £2 million to Endless, a Leeds-based private equity firm.

Kiddicare, which had sales of around £80m for 2013-2014, was founded in 1974 and has its headquartered in Peterborough.

As well as 11 stores it also operates an online business.

Morrisons had bought the business in 2011.

Peak performance in triple challenge

A TECHNICIAN from Stourbridge is calling for sponsorship as he takes on the highest mountains in Wales, England and Scotland in just 24 hours.

Chris Parkes, who works at Specsavers in High Street, will scale Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis tomorrow in aid of the Alzheimer's Society, with Matt Weston, Simon Cleeton, Scott and Nial Edwards, Laura and John Griffiths. Visit his donations site www.justgiving.com/Scott-Edwards5/

£500k to be spent on defibrillators

ALMOST £500,000 is being spent on life-saving defibrillators by West Midlands Ambulance Service.

A total of 300 defibrillators to be placed in places where cardiac arrests are more common, such as care homes. Acting emergency services director Nathan Hudson said: "The driving force behind this scheme is to get early defibrillation to many more patients. This project will save lives."

Sneak preview of hall's parkland

PEOPLE can be among the first to view Hagley Hall's historic park since its restoration while also raising money for a charity supporting the homeless. St Basils is selling tickets for a preview day on September 14. The 350-acre estate is not regularly open until next year. Call 0121 772 9614 or visit www.stbasils.org.uk/hagleyhall

More holiday flights

HOLIDAY airline Thomas Cook is to base another aircraft at Birmingham Airport next year and add new flights to Greece, Turkey and Tunisia. The company says the move will enable it to offer 47,000 more seats.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

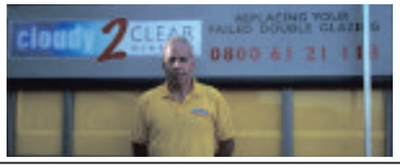
It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!



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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

IT seems rather sad that in the same month that we have celebrated all that is best about the Black Country. we also mourn the passing of one of the area's best loved sons.

Tommy Mundon was a true Black Country legend. One of the funniest men this area has ever known, he could turn the must humdrum of situations into one of his side-splitting monologues.

And while the likes of Bernard Manning went out of their way to shock audiences with their vulgarity, 'aer Tum' managed to make people laugh without ever uttering so much as a swear-word.

Despite the plethora of Liverpudlian, Mancunian and cockney comedians on our screens, television producers reckoned his humour would not travel outside of the Black Country, and this tells us all we need to know about the prejudices which outsiders continue to hold against this area.

That Tommy Mundon never managed to make it onto a national stage was a great injustice to a great man. But an even bigger injustice to those who were denied the opportunity to see him at work.

❒❒❒

And while we're on the subject, here are a few words from the great man:

"I've just landed a new job working in a ladies' sauna. I have to go in every now and again and top up the water while all the ladies are in their naked, and then afterwards I have to give them a massage.

"And would you believe it, £350 a week! Still, I think I can afford it."

❒❒❒

SOME infant school headteachers have been complaining about how they are being forced to cut their teaching budgets because of a new Government ruling that all pupils, regardless of their parents' income, should be provided with free school meals up to the age of seven.

For a brief moment, I was almost sympathetic. Surely, schools are supposed to be places of learning, not free restaurants for middle-class kids?

And then one of these headmasters came out and explained what cutbacks were having to be made.

Staff numbers? Textbooks?

"We've had to cancel an order for some tablets we were supposed to be getting," he said.

Now, making the bold assumption that he is not referring to the first aid kit, this headmaster is bemoaning the fact he will not be able to blow his school budget on iPad-type mini-computers.

Here's a revolutionary idea, Sir. Forget spending thousands of pounds on hi-tech toys, and instead focus on teaching them to read and write properly.

John Prescott admires Len's military medals

Len Whitehouse as a young soldier in the war

Len addresses a Remembrance service at Tipton

The old soldier who never forgot

D-Day veteran was a man who did his duty. **MARK ANDREWS** looks back on the life of Len Whitehouse

A D-Day veteran who helped lay the first aircraft landing strip in Normandy has died on his 94th birthday.

Len Whitehouse, who lived in Bilston, died at Russells Hall Hospital following a short illness.

He was a 23-year-old driver serving with the Royal Army Service Corps when he landed on Gold Beach in Normandy at 8am on June 6, 1944.

Daughter Sue Cadman, aged 63, said her father drove a truck off his landing craft directly onto the beach as the invasion began.

"He always said he never even got his wheels wet," she said.

Mrs Cadman, who lives in South View Road, Sedgley, said her father had never talked about the war until he was taken on a surprise trip back to Normandy for this 80th birthday in 2000.

"We arranged a holiday where there was an option to go back to the beaches if he wanted to," she said.

"We were not sure whether he would, but he agreed and when he got there he opened up for the first time about it.

"It was very emotional, and after that he was very different, he opened up a lot more about it.

"He joined the Royal British Legion, and started going into schools telling the children about his experiences."

He returned to Normandy again for the 60th anniversary commemorations in 2004, and again in 2009 for the 65th anniversary.

In a recent interview, Mr Whitehouse recalled the sight of the bodies around him as he landed on the beach, and how he gave thanks for having made it to the shore alive. "Looking out to the sea and seeing the armada of ships is something that will stay with me forever," he said.

Len would sell poppies or roses to celebrate St George's Day at Asda,Tipton

"I don't think you will see such a sight again.

"There were quite a few dead lads lying about and those memories will stay with me forever."

Fellow D-Day veteran Arthur Jones, aged 88, of Pendeford, Wolverhampton, met Mr Whitehouse around 10 years ago after they started giving talks at the former Alexandra High School, Tipton.

"He was a very nice man, we all enjoyed his company. He always seemed to be a very gentle man, a quiet man, he was always friendly and nice to know.

"He has done his duty and he had a good innings."

JMr Whitehouse was born in Regent Street , Woodsetton, the youngest of five children. Prior to the war he had worked as a centre lathe turner at Beans Engineering in Tipton.

He met future wife Cath while walking along Owen Street, Tipton, with his friends, and romance blossomed at the the Jolly youth club which met at Bloomfield Methodist Church. They married in 1941, the year before he was called up for military service.

Shortly before D-Day, he wrote to his wife, telling her that she may not hear from him for a while as he was unsure of what was about to happen.

On June 5 his company headed for Normandy, and Mr Whitehouse recalled his first sight was a sergeant who had been killed on the beach.

Mr Whitehouse came under fire as he drove across the beach and a shell pierced the fuel tank of his vehicle – two of his comrades were killed, but remarkably, there was no explosion.

After the war he returned to his trade as a centre lathe turner, joining Joseph Sankey, Bilston. He went on to work for Firth Cleveland engineering, Tipton, and Jack Nicholls on the Dormston Trading Estate , Upper Gornal, before retiring in 1992.

"He never took time off work, even when he almost lost the top of a finger in a machine accident," said his daughter.

Mr and Mrs Whitehouse also served as stewards at Hurst Hill Labour Club, Coseley in the 60sf, living on the premises, although he continued to work full time.

The couple were married for 68 years before Cath's death four years ago.

As well as daughter Sue and son Les, now 71, he also leaves three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and one great-great grandson Harry.

Hilary Brown, extended school manager at Ace Academy, which replaced Alexander High, first met Mr Whitehouse in 2003 when she launched a veteran's club to foster relations between ex-servicemen and the youngsters.

She recalled how the children were enthralled by his stories about the war.

He was president of Tipton Royal British Legion, and became a familiar figure selling poppies at the town's Asda store. He met then deputy prime minister John Prescott during a visit to Tipton's Coneygre Community Centre in 2004.

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

GEORGE Osborne's announcement that the £353 million 'super' hospital for the Black Country can finally go ahead is a big one.

The much-maligned Private Finance Initiative has been in for an overhaul. Now here comes the hospital courtesy of PF2 – a private finance scheme that's a little less, well, private.

The old system gave us schools, hospitals and more but came with a pretty hefty mortgage in terms of long-term, regular payments from the public purse. The new arrangement is meant to be smaller and simpler. But while it's all been drawn up, the long wait for the super hospital in Smethwick went on. And on. And it's not over.

It's still subject to a business case being approved and there won't even be spades in the ground before 2016. What it does give the Chancellor, and the Tory party for that matter, is something to talk about in the run-up to the General Election.

The announcement was made at Rowley Regis Hospital, which we are told is going to play a greater role once the new acute hospital a few miles away is up and running. It could have been made at Sandwell General or City Hospitals instead, I suppose.

But then they're in safe Labour seats whereas Rowley Regis is in a key marginal battleground that the Tories have to hold on to. I'm sure that's not the reason for doing it there, though.

Talking of George Osborne, here's a little insight into what goes on in the run-up to getting an interview.

These days, whenever any prominent politician from any party comes to town, the spin doctors like to gather reporters in a little room. At some point during the visit the politician is brought in to see the waiting media who are allowed to ask one, or maybe two, questions each.

Before they arrive, a spin doctor asks the reporters if they can 'maybe, agree on who is going to ask what so there's no doubling up'. They then ask to know exactly what questions we are going to give the politician so they can go and prepare them.

Part of me thinks it's good that if you're asking about a very local matter it's helpful if the politician knows the background to give an informed response. But the other part of me thinks it's a damned liberty.

Most Most high-ranking politicians, past and present,are fairly adept at dealing with the curve ball question. I'm sure Mr Osborne would have coped.

Michael Gove, long before his unceremonious dumping as Education Secretary, had not been briefed for a question in Wolverhampton about the alleged rift between the Tories and Lib Dems over free school meals. And yet he answered quickly, confidently and professionally. His spin doctors were furious.

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Partisan politics just not good enough

I WRITE with some disquiet about the piece in The Chronicle (17 July) ascribed to our MP, Chris Kelly. This and recent ramblings by our representative in Westminster increasingly resemble little more than repetition of key Tory election messages. That is not good enough, and a party as rich with business funds as the Conservatives should be able to fund it's own material.

I understood our MP was in place to represent all constituents. I understood our local newspapers would provide a reasonable degree of balance and maybe even a touch of fairness to matters. My reading of the messages of other MPs in the borough, including those of Margot James, tends to be much less partisan.

In this partisan drivel, we are to suppose Labour was responsible for a worldwide recession and that honest hard working public sector staff should be condemned for seeking a fair deal while the gap between the rich and the ordinary has grown even more in the last four years.

RICHARD GREEN
Dudley

A heinous and barbaric crime

WITH regard to the recent strangling of a dog near a school in Kates Hill; any cruelty to an animal is bad enough but this was both heinous and barbaric and I absolutely shudder to think of what the poor creature must have gone through.

Judging from The Chronicle's description it could well be two (or even more) thugs involved and that they sadistically enjoyed what they were doing.

Ian Austin MP has offered a reward to help in the capture of those responsible.

Chris Kelly MP has written to the justice secretary asking for the maximum penalty under the law should the police apprehend the culprits.

Would the maximum penalty be applied? Seeing is believing.

S HUNT
Dudley

Dogs are not only pets at risk

DOGS die very quickly in hot cars and should not be left inside them even for very short periods. Opening a window a few inches is not sufficient.

Other animals suffer, too. Rabbits must not be left in a hutch in the glaring sun or inside a sweltering garage or shed. They need a cool, shady place where the air circulates and where they are able to move freely. A hot rabbit can be kept cool by applying cold water gently to his ears.

Should your rabbit become listless, or start breathing hard through an open mouth or go limp, get him to a vet immediately.

Rabbits must be checked daily throughout summer months for signs of flystrike.

Smaller animals, like hamsters, rats and gerbils, can be kept cool by opening windows and closing curtains, using a fan (but not pointing it directly at them), refreshing water and providing a frozen water bottle, wrapped in a towel so that it cannot be chewed.

KATE FOWLER
Animal Aid

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

E-MAIL
Dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Chocolate bars and computers don't mix

PETER Rhodes reports 'Cabinet Minister Francis Maude says older people must get digitally engaged and start using the internet, or risk losing access to governmentservices, everything that can be delivered online should be and only online'.

He then reveals that a savvy city worker was duped out of £500 when using the computer when using it to purchase a computer, the money promptly vanished in a criminal gang's account. He suggests 'digitally engaged' actually means 'robbed'.

He has enlightened me of the brazen intention to soon implement this shameful attack on the senile citizens, yes I did mean senile, as some think of us.

Over the years things that started out as optional became compulsory by law. It has already started.

I bought four packs of Cadbury's Wispa bars, which say 'One in eight wins a chocolate bar'. One said 'Joyful Jubilations! You've won a free chocolate bar!' and tells you to visit cadbury.co.uk and enter a code to see which chocolate bar you've one.

But you need a computer £150 (or more) and a printer (£90). I'm no financial whizz kid, but can see an outlay of £100 plus is not worth the investment for a 40p bar. Why not put a voucher in the pack, like they did for Willy Wonka?

G GRIFFITHS
Wolverhampton

Bostin' Black Country event

WHAT a fantastic day and what a joy to see Dudley's Stone Street Square in action after 15 long years of doing nothing!

I am on about the Black Country Weekend — well done all of you.

I know the event took a lot of organisation but, believe me, everyone will be talking about it for a long time.

It really was a 'Bostin Day'.

Roll on next year's event.

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COMMERCIAL FEATURE

Don't be disappointed - choose Choices Windows

The home improvement market is changing and the demand for more choice in colour and suitability of PVC-U doors and windows is growing. Fashionable additions such as orangeries are increasingly desirable, as more people look for ways to improve their home.

Established since 1994, Tipton Windows & Conservatories Ltd, trading as Choices , believe that the latest trends are important, but quality products and exceptional service will always be paramount, which this family run business have proven over two decades.

Situated on Sedgley Road West in Tipton, the founder and company Managing Director Nathan Beddows started the business from scratch at the early age of 19 working out of the very same premises as he does today, He explains his passion:

"I cannot stress enough how much pride we take in every window, door, conservatory, orangery we manufacture and install."

With its roots in manufacturing, the business started more than 20 years ago, and right from the very start an emphasis has been placed on supplying only the finest and most energy-efficient products, but still remaining affordable.

"Our commitment extends beyond the manufacturing process to the design and installation of doors, windows, conservatories and other home improvement services," explains Nathan.

"For some customers we supply new windows and doors, for others we provide a complete home improvement service from building extensions and fitting kitchens, to designing and installing conservatories and more recently Orangeries," says Nathan.

One tremendously satisfied customer is Rick Houghton. Having being recommended to Choices Windows by colleagues at work he employed them to carry out extensive work at his home, he is keen to share his experiences and commend the team involved.

"Every stage of the process was excellently planned and we received nothing but the best service from start to finish. The tradesmen were outstanding and we were so impressed that we handed over our keys and went on holiday whilst the work was being carried out."

Rick and his family were absolutely thrilled and utterly delighted with the results on their return.

"We are so grateful to Nathan and his team for transforming our home into something we could only have dreamed of," remarked Rick.

Keen to keep ahead in the style stakes, Nathan is ever aware of the latest designs, materials and colours on offer, and strives to make these available to his customers.

"Many people are now opting for stylish coloured PVC-U, influenced by timeless muted 'National Trust' tones. Sage green, gun metal grey and cream are all becoming very fashionable alongside the traditional clean bright white," explains Nathan.

Fitting new PVC-U windows can be a good choice for the environment as well as for your home. Replacing dated double glazing can help save money on heating bills and reduce the carbon footprint of a residence.

"We offer A-rated energy-efficient windows and doors which can help save up to £250 from heating bills in the first year alone. They not only reflect heat back into the house, but also retain heat from solar gain," remarks Nathan.

"As a company we pride ourselves on giving old fashioned value for money and excellent service, we can undertake the majority of jobs and because we manufacture in house at our premises unlike the majority of our local competitors it enables us to have full control so we can manage your project from start to completion ensuring your experience is stress free".

"After many years in the Double glazing business we have seen a lot of competitors come and go, unfortunately leaving many customers without any warranty, after parting with their hard earned cash. Any customer who is considering having any home improvements should choose carefully and do their homework on the company they are considering, ensure if you part with money upfront it is protected by a Fensa approved deposit indemnity scheme, ask to visit previous customers but most importantly don't be fooled by the salesmen's tactics of a tempting "sign on the night low price offer" that the double glazing industry is notorious for "advises Nathan.

The old sayings are always the best - after a low price is long forgotten, poor quality long remains".

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The 4th Battalion Worcester Regiment give a cheer

The 1/7th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment gather at Halesowen Station

A patriotic procession by horse and cart is held in Dudley

Civic reception at St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, for departing troops

Repercussions of war felt across the region

RAILWAY stations across the nation were bustling with activity.

Thousands of part-time soldiers departing for their annual camp jostled with day-trippers making the most of the Bank Holiday weekend.

Life continued as normal in towns and villages around Staffordshire and the Black Country. On Saturday, August 1, 1914,, throngs of people lined the streets in many towns to cheer the Territorials on their way, some units travelling by train while others were marching to camp.

There was a particularly large turnout in Wolverhampton where the men of the Royal Army Medical Corps were setting off on an 85-mile march to St Asaph in North Wales.

The soldiers left their Drill Hall in Stafford Street just after 4pm. Also in the parade were Ambulance wagons, members of the Army Cyclist Corps and others. They rested in Tong in Shropshire,10 miles away, that evening. Next night they had reached

MEMORY LANE

By Marion Brennan

Bletchley, near Market Drayton. But they would go no further. In the early hours, orders arrived to turn around and return to base.

The following day, Tuesday, August 4, at precisely 11pm, came the news that Britain was at war with Germany.

Already in St Asaph were around 920 men of the Walsall Territorials who had been given a hearty send-off on Sunday morning from the Drill Hall in Whittimere Street.

Also in Wales were 1,000 men of the 6th South Staffordshires, who had arrived that afternoon. Within 12 hours they were packing their kit bags and tents to return. The order had reached the camp at 2am. They arrived at Wolverhampton High Level station at 9.30am on Monday.

The Worcestershire Regiments, whose strongest corps was the 7th Battalion which included 240 men from Dudley and 130 from Oldbury, were at camp in Minehead, Somerset when they were recalled.

With war looking ever likely, the Government had held talks with the main railway companies and arrangements put in place for a takeover by the State in the case of emergency. Many trains due to have been used for Bank Holiday Monday excursions had been commandeered for troops.

Call-up papers began to arrive at police stations across the region for officers who were Army and Naval reservists. The Territorials, so recently recalled from camp, were at their Drill Halls on Tuesday for medical inspections and exercises.

Recruitment posters and newspaper advertisements began to appear calling on men with specific trades to enlist and large crowds of young men besieged the recruiting office in Broad Street, Wolverhampton.

Britain was at war and from Bridgnorth to Brownhills, Stafford to Smethwick, the repercussions were already being felt.

The Walsall Territorials line-up in uniform at The Bridge in the town centre

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Community united by events to honour Danni

DOZENS of people turned out for a charity event in memory of 14-year-old Danni Burrows from Lower Gornal, who died after a battle with bone cancer.

The popular teenager had received treatment at Birmingham Children's Hospital before she died on July 5.

Friends from Ellowes Hall Sports College have organised various events in her honour and people gathered at The Bulls Head pub, in Gornal, for a charity fun day in her name.

Friends Ryan Cherrington, aged 18, and Josh Webb, 17, who attended the same school as Danni, decided to take part in a charity head shave and hope to have raised over£1,000.

Ryan's mother Samantha Cherrington said she had first become aware of Danni's plight after her own daughter Abby, 15, struck up a friendship with her and Danni's death had since had a major impact on the school and community.

"It has hit everyone at the school really hard," said the 38-year-old from Forest Road, Dudley.

"It was good to see everyone come together."

Balloons

Hundreds of yellow balloons were released in her memory by school friends on fields near her home at Milking Bank earlier this month.

The school is now planning to hold various fundraisers in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust.

Friends and family set up to a Facebook page in her memory that has been inundated with hundreds of messages and tributes.

At the Bulls Head, from left, teenagers Josh Webb and Ryan Cherrington take part in a sponsored headshave

Priory pupils are proud to win praise

A ONCE failing school in Dudley has pulled itself out of special measures to be rated 'good' by education watchdogs for the first time.

Priory Primary School received a glowing report from Ofsted this month. It came two years after a series of failings at the school which landed it in special measures.

But now inspectors say the strong recovery means the school is 'on track to be outstanding'.

Areas such as teaching, the behaviour of pupils and leadership were all praised.

Headteacher Jill Bennett said: "We are delighted with the incredible turn around we have managed to make in just two years and that is testament to a lot of hard work. We now have a team of enthusiastic teaching staff, pupils who are excited about learning and an extremely supportive set of governors. We will continue to work to drive standards even higher."

In the report, inspectors said: "The children are proud of their school and speak highly of it. The children have really bought into the idea of turning their school around."

MP warns of holiday health card website con

HOLIDAYMAKERS are being warned to avoid 'rip-off' websites that charge them or free health insurance cards.

British citizens are entitled to European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) that let them get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free in other European Union countries.

It is free to apply for them but there are websites that charge people a fee. Some charge around £24.99.

By Daniel Wainwright

But Adrian Bailey, MP for West Bromwich West, stressed that people did not need to pay.

He said he was aware that the number of applications for EHICs increase considerably in the summer but that there were 'some ruthless websites' who are taking advantage of holidaymakers by charging a fee for the free cards.

Mr Bailey said: "I am pleased to learn that the Government has been working with Google to take action to stamp out these websites who mislead the public and charge for this free service as well as other Government services.

"Often people are charged because they are directed through to these websites via an advertisement and then this becomes part of the holiday package when in fact there should be no charge at all.

"I understand Google has already taken action against a number of these website. It does seem that there are some people who are always prepared to rip-off the public whenever the opportunity arises and the Government and Google have my full support in stamping out this practice once and for all."

One website that comes high on the list following a Google search for 'European Health Insurance Card' is europeanhealthcard.org.uk claims a 'processing fee' is required.

Trading standards officers have warned people to check they are not falling victim to services that charge them needlessly for help with official documents.

People were reporting that when they searched online for passports and driving licences, they were clicking on the sites of private companies who offered to process the application on their behalf. The websites are not illegal but charge people for a verification service they often do not need. The Advertising Standards Agency labels them 'copycat sites'.

Information about the EHIC and official application can be found on www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card or calling 0300 300 1300.

National award for helping people

A SERVICE for people with disabilities has beaten competition from around the country to win a national award.

The Queens Cross Network in Dudley has been hailed as the best service in the UK for improving people's skills and confidence and helping them gain employment.

It has won the Putting People First Award, as part of the Great British Home Care Awards.

The awards, which are supported by the Department of Health and hosted by United Kingdom Home Care Association, celebrate excellence in the social care sector.

The Queens Cross Network received the accolade for supporting disabled people across the borough to help run services themselves, through the disability user-led organisation Disability In Action, at the Dudley centre. These include a reception meet and greet service, a peer support advice service and a café.

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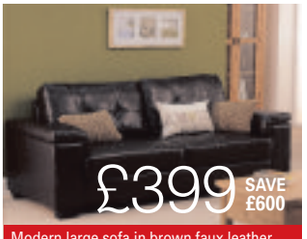

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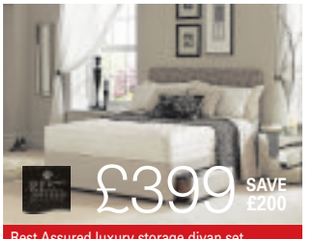

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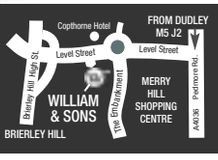

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Paul's movie palace shed up for TV award

Ready for the movie to start in Paul Slim's amazing Reelwood Shed in Stourbridge, which is up for an Amazing Spaces 'Oscar'

FOR many, a shed is just somewhere to store tools.

For Paul Slim in Stourbridge, however, his shed means national acclaim, a TV show and possibly a £1,000 cash prize.

His shed is to be featured in Amazing Spaces: Shed of the Year — a three-part Channel 4 programme presented by George Clarke which starts tonight.

Film buff Mr Slim, aged 37, kitted out his shed with a home cinema, complete with a huge screen and surround sound.

Called Reelwood, the shed is nominated in the 'unique shed' category and also contains a movie collection and memorabilia.

The project took around three months and £15,000 to complete. It's fitted with four sofas and a 119-inch screen, a 3D projector and 11.2 surround sound. Mr Slim, who used to run the Movie Junction store in Stourbridge, did a lot of the work himself.

The shed can hold 20 people and has a lobby where Mr Slim stores his collection of 3,000 DVDs and Blu-Rays.

The winner will receive a plaque, £100 worth of sponsor Cuprinol products and a crown for their shed.

Paul Slim with George Clarke

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Long hours are not productive

A BRIERLEY Hill lawyer has called for an end to the 'burning the midnight oil' culture in the workplace, saying it is hampering productivity.

Hannah Scott, an employment lawyer at Waldron's in Brierley Hill, said a new survey showed that almost half of UK managers work an extra day of unpaid overtime each week. The survey by the Institute for Leadership and Management follows changes to the law which give Britain's workforce the right to ask for flexible working hours, rather than just parents and carers.

Miss Scott said: "There is a burning the midnight oil culture here in the UK where those chained to their desk for the longest get a pat on the back, yet we are proven to be less productive than many of our European neighbours."

£58k bill for man who sold fake designer clothes on eBay

THE boss of an online clothes business who sold counterfeit designer brands via internet auction site eBay has been ordered to pay £58,000.

Matthew Brown ran Squashed Frog Clothing Company Ltd from his bedroom in his parents' house in Copper Beech Drive in Wombourne, Stafford Crown Court heard. The 30-year-old was importing clothes from China and Bangladesh before selling them on eBay.

But a brand protection officer from Dutch designer company G-Star bought a T-shirt and found it to be fake, informing police and Trading Standards officials at Staffordshire County Council.

Police went to Brown's home and seized 140 boxes from a warehouse in Kingswinford. These included 1,890 fake G-Star T-shirts and 84 fake Superdry swimming shorts.

Checks on his computer found Brown had used search engines to question the legitimacy of his supplier.

Mr Tony Watkin, prosecuting, said: "He had been trading for around eight months and said G-Star and other brands came from supplier Clever Cloggs Clothing. He said he never contacted the original brand owners but said it had been part of his future plans to do that."

Mr Philip Morris, defending, said the fake items had been a 'small' part of the business.

Brown and the company were found guilty by magistrates on four counts of possessing and selling counterfeit goods after a three-day trial

Brown was sentenced to a six-week suspended prison sentence and the company to a two-year conditional discharge. Brown was also told to repay £54,000, £4,000 costs and an £80 victim surcharge. The company must pay £4,000 costs and a £15 surcharge.

Wild West baby charity success

ALMOST £4,000 was raised by families during a fundraiser to help support a children's charity.

Families and young babies from Dudley and Kidderminster took part in the event for the charity Tommy's.

Around 360 babies were involved in the Sensathon day which had a range of events taking place on a wild west theme.

The event was held at the Kiddicare store at Merry Hill shopping centre by the Dudley Baby Sensory group.

Manager Jas Bansal said: "All the mums and dads had gone the whole way in supporting the day, putting together amazing cowboy and cowgirl outfits for their little ones and some even turned up in fancy dress themselves."

Baby group marks its birthday

Parent volunteers Joanne Weston, of Stourbridge, and Stacey Tyler-Crisp, of Quarry Bank

A GROUP supporting the families of premature and poorly babies has celebrated its fifth anniversary.

Dudley Bliss has supported more than 50 families and is run by volunteers.

Group members have supported families at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital neonatal unit by giving gifts and cards at Christmas, Mother's Day and Father's Day, and during visits to give support to families.

It celebrated with a party at Stourbridge Children's Centre featuring a special Dudley Bliss cake. More than 30 children received a gift of a book. The party was part funded by the proceeds of a Father's Day fun day and raffle organised by the group, which raised around £2,700.

Dudley Bliss is organised by three parent volunteers, Joanne Weston, Stacey Tyler-Crisp and Claire Swatman, who have all had poorly or premature babies themselves. Stacey, who recently won the Mayor's Award at the We Love Carers 2014 awards ceremony, said: "I love my volunteering role for Bliss, helping to run Dudley Bliss and supporting parents on the unit.

"The group also gives me support as I've had three premature babies, the youngest of which has just turned four years.

"Whilst my commitment is to our members and families, it is nice to receive some recognition."

Dudley Bliss holds monthly get-togethers for families who have had babies on any neonatal unit and who live in or near Dudley borough.

For further information visit www.dudleybliss.org.uk, look for Dudley Bliss on Facebook, or contact them via email dudleybliss@live.co.uk.

Police promoting summer of sport

WEST Midlands Police is set to launch a summer sports programme across the Black Country for people aged between 14 and 25.

The Sportivate initiative, which has been organised by officers in Wolverhampton, will run for six weeks and includes boxing, dancing and sailing among other sports.

It is funded by Sport England and runs with the help of the Wolverhampton Amateur Boxing Club, Sonia Webb Academy of Dance and Himley Hall Sailing Club.

People of all abilities and experience are invited to take part.

Limited free transport will be available to and from the clubs, with a number of pick up points stationed across Wolverhampton.

For information on how to join visit www.facebook.com/wolverhamptonpolice

Old Mill will open again

A PUB closed for four months is set to re-open after undergoing a major refurbishment .

The Old Mill in Windmill Street, Upper Gornal, is one of the chain of 20 pubs owned by Woodsetton-based Holden's Brewery

Estate manager Mick Doherty said that a six-figure sum was spent on renovating and partly re-building the building, which is more than 100 years old. The pub closed on March 17 and is on target to re-open in mid August.

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Society trio celebrate four decades of service

Jackie Quinton, Sue Greenaway and Meg Pottinger have each clocked up 40 years at Dudley Building Society

A LOT has changed since Jackie Quinton, Meg Pottinger and Sue Greenaway started at Dudley Building Society but speaking to customers is still one of their favourite parts of their job.

Over the next few weeks the trio of workers, all aged 56, will each reach four decades of service working behind the counters at various branches since all three of the ladies applied for the same job as an office junior at the society back in 1974.

Meg and Jackie were at school together at Rowley Regis Grammar and Sue attended nearby at Dudley Girls High.

Meg, of Gornal, said: "When we first started things were very different, everything was written down. Now all we have to do is put it into the computer and press a button, however, I still find myself using the old system from time to time.

"I love the daily contact with our customers, getting to know them and making sure we meet their expectations."

"When people come in they will often wait for me and Jackie. Quite often we have looked after their accounts for a lot of their life and they have brought members of the family to the branch too.

Friend and colleague Jackie, of Cradley Heath, added: "Time has really flown by it only feels like yesterday that we started."

Sue, who works at the Brierley Hill branch, said she recalled the days when alculations were done manually.

The whole society will be wearing something ruby as a tribute to their colleagues who have given such lengthy service.

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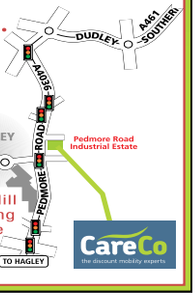

Frederick Bolland, who died at the age of 24 after he returned from Canada to enlist in the Army

The Bolland family, Richard on his mother Mary's knee and Frederick at her feet

MC hero Alec Boucher

Boy soldier Charles Lloyd

Richard Bolland was killed

How a village was left devastated after the outbreak of Great War

IN 1914, Griffiths Green in Claverley consisted of nine houses. Six of the households in that one small road had young men who were called up to serve in the First World War.

MEMORY LANE

By Mark Andrews

Three of those young men would never return.

While the First World War had a terrible impact on most of Britain, in small, close-knit communities such as Claverley, the pain was felt more than most.

The church was suddenly bereft of bell ringers and choristers. Claverley Swifts football team found itself without players. And when the young men finally did return in 1918, they came back to a community which would never be quite the same again.

"In 1914, the village of Claverley had a population of around 1,600," says Derek Moorhouse, a researcher with the Claverley Memories Local History Society.

"More than 200 of them were enlisted to serve with the forces, and a third of them were killed or injured."

The role Claverley played in the war was commemorated in an exhibition organised by the history society. And it is hard not to be moved by some of the stories.

Take for example, Mary Bolland, a widow who lost two sons during the conflict. "Frederick Bolland had been living in Canada when he heard the war had started, and he returned home to enlist with the Shropshire Yeomanry," says Mr Moorhouse, who is his great nephew.

"He went to Egypt where he contracted a fever, and he died in Alexandria in 1916, aged 24." The following January, Trooper Bolland's younger brother Richard was also called up , and enlisted with the 4th Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

He later transferred to the 9th Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers and served at Polygon Wood in the Third Battle of Ypres in October 1917. He was sent back to England after suffering gunshot wounds, but returned to the Ypres Salient after treatment. When his regiment was called to take part in the Third Battle of Aisne during the German Spring Offensive of 1918, he received fatal wounds.

A telegram sent to his mother on June 11, 1918 – by this time she had moved to Victoria Road, Wolverhampton – was blunt and to the point: "Your son, Private R Bollard, Royal Welch Fusiliers, is dangerously ill. Regret permission to visit cannot be granted." A fortnight later he was dead.

Like many of the young men who grew up in Claverley at that time, the Bolland brothers both worked as farm labourers.

Mr Moorhouse, aged 74, says: "Farm labourers made very good soldiers."

Another who volunteered was Charles Lloyd, a 14-year-old who lied about his age so he could sign up with the 1 Battalion Kings Shropshire Light Infantry.

It seems he might not have found military life all he was hoping for; while stationed in Northern Ireland he was jailed for 14 days after breaking out of his barracks.

In September, 1914, he left for France, days before taking part in the First Battle of Aisnee. He also fought in the Battle of Armentieres, where he received shrapnel wounds to his head, but he was discharged after hospital treatment. In February 1915 he contracted trenchfoot – or possibly frostbite – and was treated in a hospital. In June he was dischargedafter it was discovered he was not as old as he claimed. His story came as a big surprise to one visitor to the exhibition, his nephew Allen Abbott.

The 66-year-old retired electrician, of Goodyear Avenue, Low Hill, Wolverhampton, was not only unaware of his uncle's exploits, he was not even aware that he existed. His grandfather married Pte Lloyds's widowed mother Harriet, who lived on a farm at Rudge Heath, and their son William Dennis – Allen Abbot's father – was Charles Lloyd's step-brother.

Another village hero was Alec Boucher, a schoolteacher in Halesowen. He was one of four brothers who served. Cyril and Dennis were both badly injured in action.

The lieutentant in the 11 Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment was awarded the Military Cross in November, 1915, after recovering a wounded comrade from no-man's land while wounded himself.

He was killed in action on November 18, 1916 at the end of the Battle of Ancre – the last phase of the Battle of the Somme.

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Storms hit events and flood roads

HEAVY rain flooded many parts of Dudley, causing havoc on the roads. A month's rain fell in a matter of hours, causing some streets to become impassable.

A man hole cover was dislodged by flooding in Pensnett Road, Brierley Hill. Motorists said the water was two feet deep.

A stretch of the Bridgnorth Road at Stourton was also flooded.

Footpath

In Cradley Heath part of a brick wall collapsed, forcing closure of a public footpath.

Despite the downpours, people did take to the streets for the Halesowen Victorian Fair on Saturday. Chairman for the fair's steering group Tony Billingham said: "The event went well but the rain definitely affected the number of people who came this year."

Organisers of the Brickhouse Festival in Rowley Regis were forced to call off their event due to the heavy rain.

Hot weather with some thundery showers are forecast for this weekend.

Nicci and Mark had their marriage blessed on the same cruise ship where they first met

Cruise ship proved a love boat for this happy couple

THEY barely made any romantic waves when they first met on a cruise ship.

In fact Nicci Harper and Mark Hodgkins' friendship fizzled out when their week-long tour of the Mediterranean came to an end.

But one year later, opportunity came knocking again and this time their holiday cruise liner really did prove to be a 'love boat' for the couple.

Sea

Despite going their own ways after their initial trip, they were able to rekindle their friendship and it blossomed into romance when, purely by coincidence, their paths crossed while at sea once again 12 months later.

And when the pair decided to tie the knot, where did they receive a marriage blessing? Where else but the very cruise ship where they had met twice before.

Nicci, of High Street, Wordsley, said the pair met for the first time in 2010 on a Thomson Dream cruise liner, which included Rome and Barcelona in its ports of call.

Twelve months later Nicci, 46, and Mark, 52, who is from Yorkshire, boarded the same ship for a seven day break, each with their own group of friends.

Nicci continued: "We were sat on the deck and Mark just walked past. I couldn't believe it when I saw him.

"We spent the whole week together and it was different from the year before."

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Warning as tunnel work brings city road chaos

MOTORISTS are facing delays, buses are being diverted, and theatregoers urged to leave their cars at home with the closure of major tunnels in Birmingham.

People travelling to and from the city centre have already been struck in long queues on surrounding roads including the Aston Expressway since the A38 tunnels shut to all traffic at 10pm on Friday.

The 40-year-old tunnels are closed for the second summer in a row to enable the second phase of restoration work to be carried out. Restrictions are in place in Bridge Street and Paradise Circus as well as Snow Hill Queensway.

Roundabout

Temporary traffic lights are also in place on the Hagley Road inbound slip road onto Five Ways roundabout.

To help ease the traffic on the roads, Centro has been offering a special ticket deals for public transport during the week. A bus pass, which costs £90, will cover all bus travel throughout the region during the closure period, while the Network Tunnel Special will cost £150 and will cover all bus, tram and rail travel.

Eddie Fellows, highways network manager for Amey, which is carrying out the work, said: "It is important to stress that disruption was kept to a minimum last year because so many people heeded the advice to leave the car at home. If we do not get similar numbers of people making the change again this year, motorists may encounter significant delays."

By Heather Large

Bosses at Birmingham Hippodrome, who are expecting thousands to visit during the summer to see its production of Wicked, are advising people to consider using train and bus services rather than driving to the venue.

The New Alexandra Theatre is also advising people about the closures and the impact it could have on journey times.

A warning notice on the Hippodrome's website says: "If you are visiting the Hippodrome during this time, please consider how you will travel to the venue and whether train and bus services may be more viable than driving."

After September 1 there will be overnight closures until September 29.

There are approximately 120 people working in the tunnels at any one time and works will be ongoing 24 hours-a-day. The upgrade includes renewing the ventilation system, security and communications systems, refurbishing pumping stations and plant rooms.

Boer War memories sought for new book

AN AUTHOR researching a book on the Boer War is asking for help from the public.

Jan Robinson wants to hear from people in Staffordshire and the West Midlands who may have had a relative who fought in the conflict.

Her book, called Pen and Sword, is due to be published next year.

Some 22,000 British soldiers died in the conflict which took place between 1899-1902 in the heat of the South African sun just 12 years before the First World War.

Men of both the South and North Staffordshire Regiments are commemorated in West Bromwich, Willenhall and in Lichfield Cathedral. The author said: "It is a war very much overshadowed by the First World War. I am particularly interested in the lives of ordinary soldiers during the war and of their families in its aftermath."

She can be contacted at jane_robins@hotmail.co.uk

Tough new law leads to a firearms amnesty

POLICE have launched a guns amnesty following a law change that will see anyone found with a firearm risking a life sentence

By John Scott

The new legislation increases the maximum jail term for illegal gun possession from 10 years to life – and that includes anyone who is storing a weapon for someone else.

The Home Office amendments also clamp down on antique firearms amid fears obsolete weapons are being made viable by criminals. Anyone given a prison sentence, including suspended sentences, of three months or more is now banned from possessing this type of gun which could previously be held as an ornament with a relevant certificate.

Those who have them must now make arrangements to dispose of them and, to ensure none are dumped or fall into the wrong hands. West Midlands Police will allow guns to be handed over at police stations.

The amnesty that includes handguns, rifles, BB guns, imitation firearms, ammunition or antiques means people can do this without risk of prosecution until August 2.

Detective Inspector Andy Bannister, said: "The problem of antique weapons being used in crime is a threat we need to address. We welcome tighter controls that close any loopholes that may be exploited by criminals."

"People need to ask themselves — are you prepared to risk a life behind bars by holding a firearm for another person?"

Firearms can be taken to any one of the 41 police stations across the West Midlands – 11 of which have round-the-clock front desks – but people are advised to check station opening times in advance.

The last amnesty, in 2003, saw 1,265 firearms plus 53,190 rounds of ammunition handed over to West Midlands Police as part of a month-long nationwide amnesty.

Det Insp Bannister added: "People can hand over weapons anonymously but the history of any live weapons surrendered will be checked for evidence of its use in crimes. However, someone found in possession of a firearm in public cannot simply claim they were on their way to surrender the weapon. They would need to prove they had good intentions and we will take into account their location, the time and the manner in which the weapon was being carried."

If you suspect anyone to be involved in illegal firearms call West Midlands Police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

War years are being recalled at living museum

FROM ration books and air raids to dancing and banjo playing – there was plenty of wartime spirit on show at the Black Country Living Museum's 1940s weekend.

Thousands made their way to the attraction wearing Dudley in costumes from the Second World War, including military uniforms, trilby hats and overalls and head scarves.

Families braved stormy weather to enjoy a feast of entertainment at the event, which is now in its fourth year.

There were air raid sirens, search lights and military checkpoints as well as the chance to buy memorabilia and enjoy musical entertainment.

Singing group the D-Day Darlings were among acts taking to one of two stages at the event.

Museum spokeswoman Laura Wakelin said: "The weekend has been absolutely brilliant, despite the stormy weather – they really showed the Blitz spirit."

The museum in Tipton Road is launching its commemorative First World War summer season featuring special events.

During the summer, there will be a family discovery trail taking visitors around the museum village to learn about topics such as food shortages, munitions, war babies and mining life. They can also discover more about postcards home from the front and have a go at creating their own vintage style postcard.

Wooden it be nice to carve out a career

Wood turner Bill Wilkinson with a piece of his work at his workshop at Halfpenny Green Vineyard

SCULPTURE doesn't come more natural than this to wood turner Bill Wilkinson.

Ornate designs are crafted inside his workshop based at Halfpenny Green vineyard, near Stourbridge.

The talented 53-year-old from Sedgley decided to carve out a new career for himself after developing a passion for wood working when faced with the challenge to create a doll's house for daughter Kelly.

Recycled

On leaving his career in health and social care he decided to start up a new wood crafts business.

His business has been based at the vineyard, off Tom Lane, near Bobbington, for the past three years.

A motorised turner is used to spin a piece of recycled timber with operator then using tools including chisels to carve the wood. Mr Wilkinson produces a range of gifts including jewellery boxes and other bespoke pieces.

Stan and Ollie fans get busy with film night

THE monthly meeting of the local branch of the Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Society takes place at Stourbridge Cricket Club's pavilion on Tuesday.

This is an informal meeting at the venue at the Memorial Grounds, High Street, Amblecote, at 8pm.

Films

Members and non-members meet to enjoy a selection of half a dozen or so classic short films featuring the immortal comedy duo. Everyone is welcome and there is no need to be or become a member.

Bar and refreshment facilities are available and the admission price of just £1 includes a curry supper which rounds off the evening.

Just turn up and enjoy the fun or contact the organiser John Everton at busy_bodies@yahoo.co.uk for more information.

Monthly meetings of the society take place on the last Tuesday of each month.

The slapstick duo became world famous during the early years of talking movies.

Thin Englishman Stan Laurel and hefty American Oliver Hardy won a whole new generation of fans when their comedies from the 1920s and 30s were show on television.

They won an Oscar in 1932 for The Music Box.

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Busy summer for chart-topping singer

SINGER Becky Hill, who was made famous on BBC1's The Voice, will take to the stage at this year's Fusion Festival in Birmingham.

It will be one of a number of performances during the summer by the 20-year-old former barmaid from Bewdley.

She has been announced as one of the acts for the Birmingham event which takes place in Cofton Park on August 30 and 31.

Gecko

She will also be one of the acts performing at the V Festival at Weston Park and is also on the bill for the Reading and Leeds Festivals.

Last month the songstress reached number one with her single Gecko. She collaborates with Dutch DJ Oliver Heldens on the track. She has also worked with Rudimental.

The singer impressed judges on The Voice during her original audition when she performed John Legend's hit Ordinary People.

Demand for bricks means new jobs at mothballed factory

THREE dozen new jobs are being created as a moth-balled brick factory is brought back into operation to feed a surge in demand from the UK's housebuilders.

The recovering in the housing market has come up against a shortage of housebricks after the brickmaking industry hit hard times during the recession.

A string of plants across the West Midlands have been closed over recent years, while the Hartlebury Works was mothballed by its Austrian owners Wienerberger.

The company also owns the nearby Waresley brickworks, on the Hartlebury Trading Estate, which employs around 100 people and is the company's biggest site in the UK.

Shifts

But it can't keep up with the surge in demand from housebuilders, so Wienerberger is putting the Hartlebury Works back into operation, creating 36 new jobs.

It is part of a UK-wide plan that will create 140 jobs in all, upgrading technology, adding new shifts, re-opening another site in Ewhurst in Surrey, with the aim of hiking UK production by 200 million bricks a year.

The construction industry has shown nine months of consecutive growth.

Harald Schwarzmayr, managing director of Wienerberger UK, said: "We have seen an increase in demand since 2013, particularly after the boost to the market provided by the Help to Buy scheme, and the Bank of England's funding subsidy for lenders, which has given builders the momentum to continue expansion through 2014.

"While it is true that the industry slump did slow production over the last few years, it is important to be able to respond quickly and efficiently to market changes."

"Expanding production at Hartlebury is a key part of our strategy to continue to meet the demand for bricks."

Wienerberger owns the famous Baggeridge brand of bricks after buying the Sedgley-based company in 2006 for £89 million.

Following that deal most of the brick production at the Sedgley site was transferred to other factories and it was closed in 2009. The site is now due to be redeveloped for housing.

Ball helps GP's favourite charity

Dr Liz Pope — a ball in her memory at Brierley Hill helped her favourite charity

THOUSANDS of pounds has been raised for charity in memory of a young doctor who died hours after her car overturned in a crash on a country lane.

Dr Liz Pope was a GP partner in the Three Villages Medical Practice in Stourbridge. The 38-year-old died at her home in Claverley within two hours of the crash, which happened nearHalfpenny Green last November. An inquest heard that her accidental death may have been due to her taking too much medication for a heart condition.

Staff at Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group organised a ball at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill to raise funds for her favourite charity Riding for the Disabled. The ball raised around £2,500 which will be given to the Wyke Equestrian Centre in Shifnal where two Riding for the Disabled Groups are based.

Dr David Hegarty, Chair of Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "This is an amazing sum of money to have raised from a great event. I would like to say a big thank you to all of those who came along and to both businesses and individuals, for their generosity and donations of cash and gifts."

Dealership boss cycles to France to boost charity

THE boss of one of the Black Country's biggest commercial motor businesses has climbed on his bike to smash his fundraising target.

Andrew Hockedy, managing director of Trust Group UK with Volkswagen dealerships in Wolverhampton, Stourbridge and Redditch, is celebrating after raising £1,705 for Action Medical Research, over £100 more than his original target.

He has raised more than £7,000 thanks to his 'Hockedy Trilogy'. He raised a combined total of more than £5,400 by cycling the inaugural Warwick 100 and completing an epic Lands End to John O'Groats ride.

Andrew said: "My third and final ride is London to Paris and although under 300 miles it is still a challenge. With four days to complete it in and a mass finish under the Arc de Triomphe I am looking forward to testing myself again as well as raising vital funds for this great charity that really does put the money to such positive good use."

The organised ride will include several First World War sites. Visit his fundraising page at www.action.org.uk/sponsor/andrewhockedy1962

Don't risk life just to cool off, warn medics

PEOPLE are being urged not to cool off by swimming in rivers and canals during the current hot spell.

Ambulance bosses are warning people of the dangers of open air swimming as figures show more than 400 people drown in the UK each year. Nearly 60 of these are children and young people.

West Midlands Ambulance Service is highlighting the risks of cooling off in ponds or quarries across the region.

John Woodhall, WMAS Hazardous Area Response Team Support Manager said: "As schools break-up for the summer holidays there are more opportunities to explore the great outdoors.

"We want people to stay safe and be aware that rivers, pools, lakes and disused quarries are not recreation grounds and there are no lifeguards coming to the rescue if you get into difficulty.

"Water-filled quarries claim lives every year through drowning accidents. They have slippery slopes and unstable rock ledges.

"The water, which looks inviting, may conceal old machinery and sharp objects."

Charity gave Hannah an opportunity to impress

Hannah Wardle, age 21, was such a vital volunteer that she's got a paid job with We Love Carers in Brierley Hill

WHEN Hannah Wardle started volunteering at a charity in Brierley Hill to gain more work experience she never realised it would have such a big impact on her or the organisation.

But the 21-year-old has gone on to gain a paid apprenticeship and put her own stamp on the charity.

Last year Hannah began volunteering for charity the Insight Group, which has since been rebranded as We Love Carers.

For a year she attended the carers and young people's support charity several times a week alongside her studies at Stourbridge College, taking part in everything from cleaning to helping out at a play scheme.

Hannah now works at the Pearson Street café and attends college to gain an NVQ in customer services. Both she and the charity are thriving. She said: "I wanted to help Insight as a volunteer because I'd heard really good things about it. It was daunting at first but over time I made friends and became more confident.

"I couldn't believe it when I was offered the apprentice position. It's my first paid job and it feels really good to know that they want and trust me."

Lorraine Stockton, project manager at We Love Carers, said: "Hannah is fantastic. She's given us 100 per cent commitment and is utterly reliable. We've actually changed the way we run our coffee shop because of her suggestions."

Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) and Dudley Council are looking for 100 organisations to pledge volunteering opportunities for young people. See volunteeringcounts.org.uk/youth-pledge-100-campaign/

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Women seeking men

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DEBS petite attractive auburn haired, good listener, romantic, enjoys socialising, cosy nights in with Mr Right, seeking similar caring N/S single dad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412387**

CHRISTINA, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very very adventurous seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. **Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 410127**

JAN slim curvy professional warm, affectionate, looking to fill full time vacancy with similar male who loves cuddles/kisses and bikes for romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412167**

SAM, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1949 Box No: 408297**

KAREN pretty blonde, short in stature, big personality, keeps fit, loves dogs, seeking honest, caring male who can make me laugh. Nothing too serious just fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412377**

JEAN petite female who enjoys golf, days out, cosy evenings in, holidays, WLTM older male in his 60's with a good personality and big heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412359**

SUSIE, married, adventurous/dominant lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age/area for no strings fun. **Tel: 0905 002 1945 Box No: 412285**

JULIE really fun loving slim pretty female 38 looking for nice guy to go out with, get to know and hopefully enjoy a relationship with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411517**

RITA attractive blonde with a very kind heart seeks special man to share my life with. Please get in touch if like me you are fed up with always being the single friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412987**

JAN 5ft8ins slim pretty lady in great shape, open-minded, laidback, GSOH, OHAC, many interests, WLTM someone for cuddling up with and to share good and bad times. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412931**

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1961 Box No: 405297**

ANN slim attractive N/S lady who is easy to get along with, looking for romantic interesting man for new adventures together, hopefully ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412911**

JULIE loving, caring, honest, seeks real gent to share conversation and have a great time, friendship/relationship, who knows? **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412777**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box No: 366019**

SALLY stunning lady looking for dinner dates, partying and generally having a good time with generous man looking for his mojo! No strings, go on call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412599**

KAREN slim, tall, attractive 36yr old normal female who likes shopping, socialising, nights in/out seeking thoughtful genuine male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412041**

KIM 25yrs feminine, pretty, big blue eyes, GSOH, varied interests, likes romantic beach walks, cosy nights in, seeking honest loving man for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411777**

CAROL young 47, caring, loyal, likes music, concerts, cinema, theatre, seeks male with similar interests for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411919**

PROFESSIONAL black lady, likes cooking, music, countryside, seeking honest, reliable gent, possibly farmer for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411763**

VICKY 37yr professional, mum to one, sensual and very attractive, looking for a real man, tall, fit, sincere and passionate to enjoy each other's company. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411695**

GWENDOLINE honest, trustworthy, seeks caring gent who enjoys cinema, theatre, holidays and nights out for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412293**

DIANE voluptuous curvy and all woman, loves dancing, walking, cosy nights in, WLTM nice man for friendship, hopefully leading to something more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412321**

SARA bored blonde looking for single gents for fun, chats and meets, looking forward to hearing from you, don't be shy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412055**

EMMA petite young looking 31yr old attractive single brunette, loves walking, talking, music, seeks honest romantic 30-40yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412037**

ANNABELL 29 slim sophisticated well travelled interesting sensual fit brunette with lots to offer seeks older male to appreciate and treat me well. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412177**

Men seeking women

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message sent.

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TONY young looking 50, 5ft 8ins, slim, seeks slim rock chick, trendy for dates and LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413049**

NORTH Shropshire male, 67, N/S, solvent, GSOH, likes walks, travel, music, holidays, countryside, seeks N/S lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412867**

MAURICE gentleman, 59, gentle, kind, caring, loving, generous, seeks lady with GSOH and similar personality, slim-medium build. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412859**

TALL attractive Shrewsbury male, 54, seeks attractive female for fun and excitement in the daytime. Discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411823**

JOHN 5ft 10ins, slim, GSOH, various interests, seeks female for friendship/relationship, 35-52. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413107**

RETIRED male, seeking no strings adult fun and frolics, discretion assured, age/status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413067**

TALL 42yr old sincere male, caring, honest, loving, seeking female, 30-40 for fun, friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412483**

COUNTRY loving businessman, honest, medium build, N/S, OHAC, seeks professional, genuine, caring, honest, N/S female for loving relationship, 45-55. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412445**

MALE seeking female companion for outings, friendship and holidays. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412705**

STEPHEN 58, good looking, likes art, travel, seeking female, 50 plus for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412633**

MALCOLM 61, smoker, great personality, likes coach holidays, drives, pubs, meals out, nights out, 60's music, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412523**

FIT bubbly male, athletic, blue eyes, short fair hair, easy going, loving, GSOH, seeking female for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411901**

TIGER Woods lookalike, seeking pretty BBW for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411801**

IAN 65, romantic, likes to wine/dine, days out, seeking younger female for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412087**

MARK fun loving, easy going, fair hair blue eyes, athletic, tanned, looking for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 411989**

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Sam and Ed find global success

by Leon Burakowski

LONDON soul singer Sam Smith is one of the great musical success stories of the year with his debut album topping charts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Bringing in a heap of contemporary and retro soul influences, from skittering drum 'n' bass to a cool 80s club classic sound and Aaron Neville-style old school soul warbling, the banker's son with the impressive vocal range is set to join Adele and Ed Sheeran (more on him later) as a major British export.

In The Lonely Hour (Capitol Records) is produced within an inch of its life with lots of hooks and gimmicks, particularly on Life Support, Money On My Mind and La La La, the song that introduced him last year when Naughty Boy's guest vocalist.

Smith's Glastonbury set suggests he can deliver live and he will have a full house lapping up his slick pop-R&B when in concert at Birmingham's O2 Academy venue on October 27.

The other British singer-songwriter bound for world domination is Ed Sheeran with second album **X** (Warner Music). His chief lyrical interests remain sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll on a bunch of bland songs that don't have anything interesting to say. Only with Sing, the album's first hit , does he attempt something different, in a Justin Timberlake style, and that works well. It is debatable how much of that is down to Sheeran or ace producer and Sing's co-writer Pharrell Williams.

Sheeran is in concert at Birmingham's LG Arena on October 19 and 20. He and Sam Smith are among the acts playing the V Festival at Weston Park.

Marc Almond has realised a dream by working with Bowie and Bolan producer Tony Visconti on extended EP (it's padded out with remixes) **Dancing Marquis** (Cherry Red) but it's the collaborations with Pulp's Jarvis Cocker (Worship Me Now) and Carl Barat of The Libertines (Love Is Not On Trial) that impress. Dedicated Almond fans and admirers of Brechtian drama may also appreciate **Ten Plagues** (Cherry Red). It's a double package pairing a studio recording of the song cycle written by playwright Mark Ravenhill about London's Great Plague with a DVD of Almond performing it at the East End's atmospheric Wilton's Music Hall.

Whilst modern soul singers like Sam Smith are finding success, some old timers are still doing their thing, such as Detroit's Willie Jones on his belated solo debut **Fire In My Soul** (Shout!). Formerly one of The Royal Jokers, he has a bluesy soul voice and is joined by guests Betty LaVette, guitar legend Steve Cropper and Black Francis from The Pixies. Fire In My Soul chugs along nicely but never burns bright.

The classic 1960s and 70s soul hits from Detroit's Motown label still burn bright and, now they don't get so much radio play, there is a generation to discover songs that make you want to go Dancing In The Street. **The Nation's Favourite Motown Songs** (Universal), released to accompany a Saturday night TV show (you may still catch it on ITV Player) has 40 chartbusters from such as Smokey Robinson, The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Jackson 5 and, ultimate favourite, Marvin Gaye's I Heard It Through The Grapevine.

Not lonely now — Sam Smith has had transatlantic success with his debut

X-tra special but the title of Ed Sheeran's successor to Plus is Multiply

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John Rutter's Christmas Celebration at the Royal Albert Hall

Pick of the week

Two days departing December 11

PRICE FROM £109

The music of Christmas time would not be complete without that of renowned composer and conductor John Rutter.

This is a chance to join him as he brings together the beautiful voices of a special guest choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, to raise the roof of the Royal Albert Hall with a selection of Christmas carols, choral pieces and orchestral works.

Included is a side circle ticket for the afternoon performance of this classic festive favourite, which also includes numerous sing-along carols.

A visit to Hyde Park, in the heart of London, for the magical Winter Wonderland event is also part of the itinerary. Here there are live shows, fun fair rides and the largest outdoor ice rink in the capital.

Browse the gifts and crafts of the market stalls, which offer a refreshing alternative to the high street goods, and warm up with tasty seasonal treats.

Please note entry to the Hyde Park Winter Wonderland is free, but there is a charge for some of the attractions including the ice rink and rides.

INFO

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Ticket to John Rutter's Christmas Celebration at the Royal Albert Hall
- Visit to Hyde Park Winter Wonderland
- Services fo a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Paddy Power Gold Cup

Two days departing November 15

PRICE FROM £99

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Entrance to the Best Mate enclosure
- Visit to Bath
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra in London

Two days departing December 19 and 20

PRICE FROM £185

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Seated ticket to see André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra at Wembley Arena (upgrade offerred)
- Return coach transfers between the hotel and Wembley Arena
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

Longleat Safari and Adventure Park

Two days departing October 11

PRICE FROM £119*

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Admission to Longleat Safari and Adventure Park
- Visit to Bath
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

*Child price from £109 (conditions apply)

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Walking for Softies in North Devon

Four days departing October 17

PRICE FROM £225

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Two fully guided walks in North Devon
- Visit to Barnstaple
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Buckingham Palace

Day trip departing September 21

PRICE FROM £59

- Return coach travel
- Entrance to Buckingham Palace including the Royal Childhood exhibition
- Services of a tour driver

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Beamish and the North York Moors Railway

Four days departing October 10

PRICE FROM £249

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Admission to Beamish – The Living Museum of the North
- Ride on the North York Moors Railway
- Visits to Whitby, Harrogate and Richmond
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

The Tall Ships Regatta at Royal Greenwich

Two days departing September 6

PRICE FROM £99

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Visit to Royal Greenwich for the Tall Ships Regatta
- Visit to Royal Windsor
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Isle of Wight and Osborne House

Three days departing September 26

PRICE FROM £179

- Return coach travel and ferry crossings
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Entrance to Osborne House and Queen Victoria's private beach
- Visits to Yarmouth, Alum Bay, Godshill, Newport and Ryde
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Lake Garda, Venice and Verona

Eight days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £599

- Return flights
- Seven nights half-board accommodation
- Choice of hotels
- Tour of Lake Garda
- Guided tours of Venice and Verona
- Tour of the Dolomite mountains
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra in Brussels

Three days departing November 14

PRICE FROM £274

- Return coach and Channel crossings
- Two nights bed and breakfast acommodation
- Seated ticket to see André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra at the new Palais 12 Arena in Brussels (upgrades offered)
- Return coach transfers to and from the concert venue
- Visit to Brussels
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

Bruges by Eurostar

Four days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £299

- Return standard class seat on Eurostar
- Return rail connection to London
- Return coach transfer overseas
- Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided walking tour of Bruges
- Visit to traditional chocolate maker
- Visit to Ypres and the First World War battlefields
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally

Organised by RivieraTravel (ABTA V4744)

Dame Janet in South African play

ACCLAIMED Johannesburg-born actress Jane Suzman is appearing at Birmingham Rep alongside up-and-coming young South African actor Khayalethu Anthony in Solomon and Marion, written and directed by Lara Foot.

The production in the Rep Studio from October 16 to November 1 will pair Dame Janet, who was nominated for an Oscar in 1971 for her role as the Tsarina in Nicholas and Alexandra, with the 26-year-old actor who played a radical prisoner in Mandela biopic Long Walk to Freedom.

Set in South Africa as unrest precedes the 2010 World Cup, it charts the relationship between an elderly widow and the grandson of her former servant. Call 0121 236 4455.

Satellite rockers come in to land

PROGRESSIVE rock band Anathema will be playing Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on September 25.

The concert will come hot on the heels of the release of the Liverpool band's 10th studio album, Distant Satellites, which was launched this summer. Distant Satellites is a follow-up to the 2012 album Weather Systems and was recorded in Oslo. Tickets are priced £16.50.

Birmingham heavy metal veterans Jameson Raid will be playing their only UK date this year in Bilston.

The band, formed in 1975, play at the Robin 2 on November 24. Tickets in advance are £10.

Magical show puts spellbinding spin on much-loved tale of Oz

Wicked logistics on stage

BACK stage at a London West End hit, where the show remains in one venue for a long run, certainly takes some organisation but just imagine how complicated it is for a touring production which moves from city to city.

That is precisely what Anthony Field, the company manager for the 2014 UK tour of hit musical Wicked, faces on a regular basis.As Wicked takes up residence at Birmingham Hippodrome along with it comes no less than 12 HGVs full of all things green, to ensure audiences are treated to an amazing theatrical experience.

Sublime organisation is the key and at any one of the nine productions of Wicked currently running across the world, every item is placed in exactly the same spot backstage, thus ensuring that the resident stage crew is able to create as perfect a performance as possible.

Mean green machine — the Oz head from hit musical Wicked *Photo: Christopher Davies*

I WILL never be able to watch The Wizard of Oz in the same way again. Judy Garland and her pals can follow their Yellow Brick Road from here to eternity now, I feel deceived.

I always had a bit of sympathy for the Wicked Witch – she did find her sister squashed – but now I fully appreciate what a bad rap this scapegoat got.

My eyes have been opened thanks to the opening in Birmingham of Wicked, the untold stories of the witches of Oz. Judging by the reception from the Hippodrome crowd, there are a few more supporters in the Wicked Witch's green corner now.

Wicked's heroine Elphaba

Wicked is a captivating musical. It has all the magic (no pun intended) that you would expect from such a top-notch West End show.

There are some great hi-tech effects, choreography is superb and the costumes flamboyant. But it is also a clever story entwined with the Wizard of Oz that we know and love, reflecting the plot of the film yet ultimately leaving the audience distanced from the tale they thought they knew.

The star of the musical, Elphaba was played on press night by understudy Jemma Alexander – and what a performance she gave. She seamlessly transformed from 'freak' to heroine, winning the hearts of the audience with her grit yet obvious vulnerability.

A high point was her uplifting performance of Defying Gravity as she flew above the stage. Emily Tierney put in a powerful performance as dizzy white witch Glinda who also undergoes a striking transformation of her own. The musical focuses on the relationship between Elphaba and Glinda. The two 'witches' were rightly rewarded with a standing ovation.

Wicked is spellbinding. An excellent cast, solid score and a thought-provoking story that makes you completely rethink the Wizard of Oz. Christmas viewing will never be the same. Runs until September 6.

Diane Davies

T.Rextasy born to boogie again

THOSE inspired by Marc Bolan musical 20th Century Boy, recently staged in Wolverhampton and Birmingham, can show that they were born to boogie again when top tribute act T.Rextasy Get It On at Bilston's Robin 2 venue on Saturday, August 23.

The corkscrew-haired groover, who would have been 67 this year had he survived a fatal car crash in 1977, is celebrated by amazing soundalike Danielz who has been playing the music of Bolan and T.Rex for more than 20 years. Get set for such classics as Metal Guru, Ride A White Swan, Hot Love and, of course, 20th Century Boy.

Tickets cost £12.50 in advance (call 01902 401211) or a £13.50 on the door.

Tim is to front the Jersey Boys

WEST End actor Tim Driesen has been cast as Frankie Valli in the touring production of hit musical Jersey Boys, which comes to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre during the festive season.

Driesen has been leading the cast in the Dutch production of the show and has also performed in Rock of Ages and Never Forget in the West End.

The story of 1960s and 70s hitmakers The Four Seasons, recently made into a movie by director Clint Eastwood, makes its first Midlands appearance at Stoke Regent Theatre October 28 to November 8 before its Brum stint from December 9 to January 3.

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CHOICE

Jacques Peretti

The Men Who Made Us Spend
(BBC2, 9.10pm)
Jacques Peretti visits American behavioural researchers who use their skills to help companies advertise goods to children, as he explores the history behind marketing products to younger consumers. He talks to a Nickelodeon executive who brought American-style kids' TV to the UK and also meets a car designer who promoted his vehicle to the children in the back seat. Jacques reveals how these techniques have been applied to adults, and explores the rise of computer gaming for grown-ups and chats to the people behind the Neopets craze. Last in the series.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** Commonwealth Games. **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.15** Commonwealth Games. Live coverage of the mixed team triathlon relay. **3.00** Commonwealth Games. Continued coverage from Glasgow. **5.25** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.45** Commonwealth Games. Further coverage on day three of the Games.

7.00 Commonwealth Games. Hazel Irvine and Gary Lineker introduce live coverage of this evening's swimming finals, which take place at Tollcross International Swimming Centre in Glasgow. The semi-finals in three events – the men's 100m freestyle and 50m backstroke, and women's 50m butterfly – are scheduled in the pool, along with seven finals, as the swimming timetable reaches the halfway point. The men's finals are the Para-Sports 200m freestyle S14, 100m breaststroke and 200m butterfly, with the women's being the 50m freestyle, 100m backstroke, 200m breaststroke and 4x200m freestyle relay. The men's butterfly race should involve Chad Le Clos, who became one of the global stars of the sport with his gold and silver medals at London 2012, and the South African also claimed five medals when the Commonwealth Games were held four years ago in India. There will also be plenty of interest for the home nations in the pool, notably in the women's 50m freestyle, which should feature England's Fran Halsall, who already has seven Commonwealth medals to her name, including a silver in this discipline in 2010. Plus, updates and reports on a variety of sports on day three of the Games, which has seen the start of the rugby sevens tournament and the conclusion of the rhythmic gymnastics and judo.

10.10 BBC News; Weather.
10.30 The National Lottery Live.
10.40 Tonight at the Games. Mark Chapman and Clare Balding present a round-up of the day's action on day three of the Commonwealth Games, featuring triathlon, swimming, netball and track cycling.
11.40 Commonwealth Games Sportsday.
11.55 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.00 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Film: The Saint's Vacation. (1941) **7.00 Film:** The Saint Meets the Tiger. (1943) **8.05** The Living Planet. (R) **9.00** Fred Dibnah's Industrial Age. (R) **9.30** Great British Railway Journeys. (R) **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. (R) **11.30** Food & Drink. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's India. (R) **1.00** Bette Davis: Talking Pictures. (R) **1.45 Film:** Now, Voyager. (1942) Romantic drama, starring Bette Davis and Claude Rains. **3.40** Flog It! **4.40** Hive Alive. (R) **5.40** Formula 1: Hungarian Grand Prix Qualifying Highlights.

6.55 Antiques Road Trip. Antique experts Charlie Ross and Thomas Plant begin the second leg of their journey in Bath, before travelling through the Cotswolds to an auction in Stroud, Gloucestershire. They then pick up bargains on the way through Worcestershire and finish at a saleroom in Wrexham, north Wales.

7.55 Dad's Army. Mainwaring and Wilson decide to recruit women into the platoon to take care of the less demanding tasks, but the captain loses his heart to an attractive widow. (R)

8.25 Proms Extra. New series. Katie Derham returns with the weekly magazine show, with highlights of the Proms so far and previews of this week's concerts. Plus, music by pianist Haochen Zhang.

9.10 The Men Who Made Us Spend. Jacques Peretti visits American behavioural researchers who use their skills to help companies advertise goods to children, as he explores the history behind marketing products to younger consumers. He talks to a Nickelodeon executive who brought American-style kids' TV to the UK and also meets a car designer who promoted his vehicle to the children in the back seat. Jacques reveals how these techniques have been applied to adults, and explores the rise of computer gaming for grown-ups and chats to the people behind the Neopets craze. Last in the series.

10.10 Commonwealth Games.

10.30 Film: Up in the Air. (2009) A corporate downsizing expert finds his emotionally detached lifestyle under threat from an executive with revolutionary ideas. Comedy drama, with George Clooney.

12.15 Film: Klute. (1971)

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Dino Dan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Canimals. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.20** Digimon Fusion. (R) **7.45** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.00** Adventure Time. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** ITV News; Weather. **11.30** Storage Hoarders. (R) **12.30** All Star Mr & Mrs. (R) **1.30** Dinner Date. (R) **2.30 Film:** The Mirror Crack'd. (1980) Miss Marple mystery, starring Angela Lansbury. **4.30 Film:** Twister. (1996) Action thriller, with Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton.

6.35 Regional Programme; Weather.
6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, featuring everything from cute kids and crazy animals to pranks and painful-looking accidents. (R)

7.30 Tipping Point: Lucky Stars. X Factor winner Sam Bailey, Coronation Street star Hayley Tamaddon and gymnast-turned-2012 Strictly Come Dancing champion Louis Smith have a go on the arcade-style token-pushing machine. Dropping counters down a choice of four chutes, the celebrity contestants hope to knock piles of them off a moving shelf – and the more they collect, the better their chances of scooping the £20,000 prize for a charity of their choice. Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard.

8.30 Film: Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones. (2002) Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi and apprentice Anakin Skywalker are sent to protect Senator Padme Amidala from an assassin. However, as galactic civil war threatens to erupt, the pair are forced to split their efforts, leading Anakin into an ill-advised romance and the beginnings of a journey toward the dark side. George Lucas's second prequel to the original sci-fi trilogy, starring Ewan McGregor, Hayden Christensen, Natalie Portman and Christopher Lee.

11.10 ITV News; Weather.

11.30 Goodwood Festival of Speed 2014. Highlights from Goodwood House in West Sussex

12.30 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** Trans World Sport. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.55** Frasier. (R) **10.25** Frasier. (R) **10.50** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.15** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.40** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.05** The Simpsons. (R) **12.35** Speed with Guy Martin. (R) **1.40** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Ascot and York. **4.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.50** Come Dine with Me. (R)

6.20 Come Dine with Me. Driving instructor Alison Firth hosts the final dinner party in Warwickshire, and hopes that her 1980s disco-themed night will impress her guests. (R)

6.50 Channel 4 News.

7.05 Amazing Spaces Shed of the Year. George Clarke presides over the 2014 Shed of the Year competition, visiting a range of extraordinary and eccentric builds vying for the title across Britain. (R)

8.00 Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud follows the progress of Simon and Jill Bennett as they try to restore two timber-framed barns in Suffolk. The couple found out that one of the buildings is among the smallest surviving medieval guildhalls in the country, and while Kevin advises them to conserve it in its present state, Simon is determined to restore it to its former glory. (R)

9.00 Film: Paul. (2011) An alien held captive in a top-secret American military base escapes and hides out in the van of two English comic-book geeks on a tour of UFO hotspots. The wisecracking extraterrestrial enlists the duo's help in getting back to his spaceship, but they are soon pursued by government agents and unwittingly become kidnappers. Sci-fi comedy, starring Simon Pegg and Nick Frost, with the voice of Seth Rogen.

11.05 Alan Carr: Chatty Man Summer Special. The comedian is joined by Miranda Hart, Vin Diesel, The Inbetweeners stars and Rizzle Kicks for an evening of summertime fun and chat.

12.05 Film: Dreamgirls. (2006) **2.20** Utopia. (R) **3.15** Hollyoaks. **5.20** How to Cook Like Heston. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Power Rangers Megaforce. (R) **10.35** Power Rangers Megaforce. (R) **11.10** Access. **11.15** Big Brother. (R) **12.45** NCIS. (R) **1.40** NCIS. (R) **2.40 Film:** Cahill, US Marshal. (1973) Western, starring John Wayne. **4.50 Film:** Rio Lobo. (1970) Howard Hawks' Western, with John Wayne and Jorge Rivero.

7.00 5 News Weekend.

7.05 World's Craziest Weddings. Comedian Milo McCabe narrates a selection of incidents and stunts that made people's special days even more memorable, including footage of the world's first zero-gravity wedding. (R)

8.00 Baby Face Brides. Documentary following three couples from different backgrounds who all have something in common – the bride-to-be will be walking down the aisle as a teenager. Rebecca was pregnant when she got together with Aaron and they have a budget of £2,000 for their big day, while Lauren had been going out with Duncan for just four months when he proposed. Unemployed Ryan saved up to buy Emmie's ring and his mother and grandmother have taken control of organising the big day. (R)

9.00 Big Brother. Highlights of another 24 hours in the Big Brother house, including coverage of the latest eviction as seen from the point of view of the contestants, who share their diary-room thoughts on their recently departed friend – or enemy. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.00 Autopsy: The Last Hours of Michael Hutchence. Richard Shepherd investigates the death of INXS frontman Michael Hutchence, who was found dead with a belt round his neck in his Sydney hotel room in November 1997. (R)

11.00 Big Brother's Bit on the Psych. Rylan Clark and Iain Lee present analysis of the housemates' behaviour, with input from psychologists and body-language experts.

12.00 SuperCasino. **3.10** The Dog Rescuers with Alan Davies. (R) **4.00** Great Scientists. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.00** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.10** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.20** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.25** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
10.00 Film: Blades of Glory (2007) **11.30** Family Guy **1.40** American Dad! **2.25** People Just Do Nothing **2.55** Impractical Jokers **3.55** Close

BBC Four
7.00 Human Planet **8.00** Treasures of Ancient Egypt **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.55** Pink Floyd: Wish You Were Here **11.55** Pink Floyd: A Delicate Sound of Thunder **1.30** Top of the Pops: 1979 **2.10** Commonwealth on Film **2.40** Treasures of Ancient Egypt **3.40** Close

ITV2
11.40 Take Me Out **1.05** The Only Way Is Essex **2.35** Dinner Date: Australia **3.30** You've Been Framed Rides Again! **4.30** You've Been Framed! **5.30 Film:** Cats & Dogs (2001) **7.15 Film:** Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **9.00 Film:** The 40 Year-Old Virgin (2005) **11.20 Film:** Friends with Kids (2011) **1.35** The Magaluf Weekender **2.25** Crazy Beaches **2.45** Nicki Minaj: The Hot Desk **2.55** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
12.15 Inspector Morse **4.55** A Touch of Frost **7.00** Lewis **9.00** Foyle's War **11.00** Bomb Girls **12.00** A Touch of Frost **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4
11.00 Storage Wars **11.55** The Cycle Show **1.00** Tour de France Highlights **2.00** Tour de France Live. Stage 20 from Bergerac to Perigueux. **5.00** Storage Wars **6.00** British Superbike Championship Highlights **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00 Film:** From Russia with Love (1963) **10.25 Film:** The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **1.35** Motorway Patrol **2.00** Tour de France Highlights **3.00** Teleshopping **3.30** The Store **5.30** Teleshopping

E4
11.00 Rules of Engagement **1.30** Suburgatory **2.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.00** How I Met Your Mother **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **5.00** How I Met Your Mother **6.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** The 100 **9.00 Film:** Hitman (2007) **10.50** The Big Bang Theory **11.50** Virtually Famous **12.35** Rude Tube **1.40** How I Met Your Mother **2.35** Bob's Burgers **4.05** Glee **4.45** Desperate Housewives

Film4
11.00 The Last Mimzy (2007) **1.00** Hope Floats (1998) **3.15** Gulliver's Travels (2010) **4.55** The Love Bug (1968) **7.10** Stormbreaker (2006) **9.00** Sleepy Hollow (1999) **11.05** End of Days (1999) **1.25** Predator (1987) **3.40** Close

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Take in a top West End show and have some free time in London for shopping and sightseeing.

For the Dine and Dance option see the matinee performance before heading back to the hotel for dinner and a disco (conditions apply). Or the Saturday Night option includes a ticket for the show to see an evening performance.

Both breaks include a theatre ticket, overnight stay in a four-star outer London hotel, with full English breakfast (plus dinner for Dine and Dance options).

Pick ups points offered are Dudley, Shrewsbury, Telford, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

**The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.*
Single room supplements apply. for all breaks

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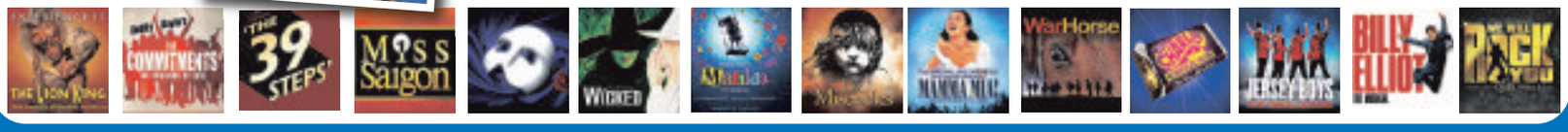

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Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions

CHOICE

Tom Lawton

Tom's Fantastic Floating Home
(Channel 4, 7pm)
New series. Tom Lawton has been responsible for a host of inventions, including skate bikes, 360-degree bubble cameras, wind-powered lighting systems and recordable alarm clocks. In this programme, he is using his creative imagination to transform a derelict boat into a home filled with practical inventions for everyday life. He begins by tackling the challenges of shelter and security, coming up with an 'all-seeing eye' to ward off intruders, an armadillo-inspired retractable roof and a garden that maintains itself.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **8.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **8.55** Commonwealth Games. **12.00** Commonwealth Games. Continued coverage from Glasgow. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Commonwealth Games. The opening track events at Hampden Park. **4.50** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **5.10** Formula 1: Hungarian Grand Prix Highlights.

6.30 Commonwealth Games. Hazel Irvine presents further coverage of the fourth day of the Games in Glasgow, including athletics and track cycling.

7.10 Commonwealth Games. Gary Lineker introduces the concluding live coverage on day four of the Games in Glasgow, featuring the latest night in the pool at Tollcross International Swimming Centre. The semi-finals of the men's 50m breaststroke and 100m butterfly, and women's 100m freestyle and 100m breaststroke are on the agenda this evening, along with seven finals, including the men's 50m backstroke, 100m freestyle and 4x200m freestyle relay. The backstroke promises to be fast and furious, featuring as it does a one-length sprint for glory, and England's Liam Tancock won gold four years ago in Delhi in a new Games record, as he did in the 100m, making him one of the stand-out performers in the pool as the England squad finished well behind Australia in the standings. The Australians have since unearthed another star in the shape of James Magnussen, who will expect to be victorious in the freestyle, having won silver at London 2012 to add to his two world championship triumphs. As for the home support, they will be cheering on Scotland in the relay, in which they won silver four years ago – one of only six medals they managed to win in the swimming events. Coverage continues on BBC Two.

10.05 BBC News.

10.30 Tonight at the Games. Mark Chapman and Clare Balding present a round-up of the fourth day's action.

11.40 Commonwealth Games Sportsday. Katherine Downes presents a round-up of the fourth day's events in Glasgow.

11.55 Weather for the Week Ahead.

12.00 BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Film: The Gay Falcon. (1941) **7.20** Monty Don's French Gardens. (R) **8.20** Countryfile. (R) **9.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **9.35** The Beechgrove Garden. **10.05** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.35** Paul Hollywood's Pies & Puds. (R) **12.05** Rick Stein's India. (R) **1.05 Film:** Cimarron. (1960) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **3.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** Commonwealth Games. Featuring the men's 5,000m final.

6.30 Flog It! Trade Secrets. Paul Martin and the show's experts offer advice on making money from antique domestic tools, including the most expensive ear cleaner that James Lewis has ever encountered.

7.00 Antiques Road Trip. Thomas Plant and Charlie Ross visit Church Stretton, Welshpool, Oswestry, Wrexham, Lichfield and Walsall before ending at their final auction showdown in Bedford.

8.00 Dragons' Den. Two entrepreneurs try to impress Peter Jones by eating their own brand of dog food, and the Dragons are entertained during a pitch by a colourful Indian dance troupe.

9.00 Red Arrows: Inside the Bubble. The Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team – more commonly known as the Red Arrows – is based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire and has taken part in more than 4,500 displays since 1965. This documentary offers an insight into the day-to-day work and lives of the 120-strong team of pilots and ground crew as they prepare to mark the unit's 50th display season, with celebrations reflecting how the Red Arrows remain the public face of the RAF, helping with recruitment and acting as ambassadors for the United Kingdom.

10.05 Commonwealth Games. The concluding coverage on day four of the Games, which are being staged in Glasgow.

10.30 QI XL. Extended edition. Victoria Wood, Richard Osman and Jason Manford join Alan Davies on the comedy quiz, with host Stephen Fry asking questions on the theme of the kitchen sink.

11.15 Film: Casanova. (2005) Romantic period drama, starring Heath Ledger, Sienna Miller and Jeremy Irons.

1.00 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R)

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Dino Dan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.50** Canimals. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.20** Digimon Fusion. (R) **7.45** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.00** Deadtime Stories. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** May the Best House Win. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** ITV News; Weather. **11.35** River Monsters. (R) **12.05** Love Your Garden. (R) **1.05** Long Lost Family. (R) **2.05 Film:** Columbo: Lady in Waiting. (1971) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk and Leslie Nielsen. **3.50** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.50** Tipping Point. (R)

6.45 Regional Programme; Weather.

7.00 ITV News; Weather.

7.15 Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show, asking contestants Richie, Rachael and Craig to "say what they see" as they try to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Catchphrase round, where one of them could win £50,000. (R)

8.00 Foyle's War. The detective's investigation into the death of a nameless Russian leads to a mysterious military facility run by Colonel Harry Galt, a respected soldier with an impeccable war record. However, as Foyle makes inquiries, he realises the deceased was a spy with dangerous connections to British Intelligence. Meanwhile, Sam does her best to help husband Adam during his by-election campaign, but can't help putting her foot in it. Crime drama, starring Michael Kitchen and Honeysuckle Weeks, with Jonathan Hyde and Daniel Weyman. (R)

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.15 Film: Ocean's Twelve. (2004) The crooks reunite when an old enemy demands they repay the money they stole from him three years previously. Crime caper sequel, with George Clooney, Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts.

12.30 The Store. Home shopping. **2.35** Motorsport UK. Highlights from Croft. **3.25** British Superbike Championship Highlights. The latest action. **4.15** Britain's Best Bakery. Three Devon-based bakeries compete. (R) **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. The host invites guests to air their differences over family and relationship issues. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The Hoobs. (R) **6.40** The Hoobs. (R) **7.05** VW Racing Cup. **7.35** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** The Simpsons. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons. (R) **3.30 Film:** Step Up. (2006) Romantic dance drama, with Channing Tatum and Jenna Dewan. **5.35** Deal or No Deal.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Tom's Fantastic Floating Home. New series. Tom Lawton has been responsible for a host of inventions, including skate bikes, 360-degree bubble cameras, wind-powered lighting systems and recordable alarm clocks. In this programme, he is using his creative imagination to transform a derelict boat into a home filled with practical inventions for everyday life. He begins by tackling the challenges of shelter and security, coming up with an "all-seeing eye" to ward off intruders, an armadillo-inspired retractable roof and a garden that maintains itself.

8.00 The Mill. Esther comes of age and leaves the apprentice house, moving into a small, dirty cellar in Styal village, and her head is still spinning from her initial encounter with trainee shoemaker Will. Daniel spends more time away from home at political meetings, and his wife Susannah struggles to adjust to life away from her friends. Meanwhile, Peter returns from a speaking tour with Hannah and gets to know Miriam better, but she is horrified by the rumours that start circulating about them the next day.

9.00 Child Genius. The 15 remaining gifted youngsters face two more gruelling rounds, including one in which they have an hour to commit 104 randomly shuffled playing cards to memory.

10.00 Film: The Negotiator. (1998) A hostage negotiator accused of murder takes captives and tries to convince a colleague sent to reason with him of his innocence. Thriller, with Samuel L Jackson and Kevin Spacey.

12.40 Film: The Insider. (1999) **3.15** The Million Pound Drop. (R) **4.10** Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Abby's Flying Fairy School. (R) **6.25** Bubble Guppies. (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.50** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.50** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.35** Mio Mao. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **10.00** Access. **10.05** My Child Is a Monkey. (R) **11.05** Big Brother. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.05 Film:** Big Momma's House. (2000) **2.55 Film:** The Kid. (2000) **4.55 Film:** Happy Feet. (2006)

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v India. Mark Nicholas presents highlights of the opening day of the Third Test at Ageas Bowl in Southampton, where the five match series continued.

8.00 The Incredible Hulk Woman: Extraordinary People. Documentary following a mother-of-three who has rare neurological condition stiff-person syndrome, which causes severe muscle spasms in the arms and legs. (R)

9.00 Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.00 Film: Rambo. (2008) The one-man army travels to Burma to rescue a party of missionaries from a sadistic military officer. Action sequel, directed by and starring Sylvester Stallone. With Julie Benz. Edited to reduce end credits.

11.40 Film: Universal Soldier: The Return. (1999) The resurrected warrior battles against a deadly computerised opponent. Action adventure sequel, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme and Michael Jai White. Edited to remove content as advised by BBFC.

1.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Emergency Bikers. (R) **4.00** Great Scientists. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.00** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.20** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
10.00 Family Guy **10.45** People Just Do Nothing **11.15** Family Guy **12.45** Russell Howard's Good News **1.15** People Just Do Nothing **1.45** Impractical Jokers **2.15** Slum Survivors

BBC Four
9.15 A Hundred Million Musicians: China's Classical Challenge **9.45 Film:** In Darkness (2011) **12.00** Northern Soul: Living for the Weekend **1.00** Motown at the BBC **2.00** Lionel Richie – Dancing on the Ceiling **3.00** Prince: A Purple Reign

ITV2
12.30 America's Got Talent **2.50** The Hot Desk: Neon Jungle **3.00** You've Been Framed! **3.55 Film:** The Incredible Hulk (2008) **6.05 Film:** Mr Magorium's Wonder Emporium (2007) **8.00 Film:** About a Boy (2002) **10.00** The Only Way Is Essex **10.50 Film:** Saw II (2005) **12.40** TV OD **1.05** Fake Reaction **1.50** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed!

ITV3
11.15 Jane Eyre **1.30** A Touch of Frost **3.50 Film:** On the Buses (1971) **5.40** Inspector Morse **8.00** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs **9.00** It'll Be Alright on the Night's Best of the Worst **10.00 Film:** The Elephant Man (1980) **12.35** William and Mary **1.35** Wycliffe **2.30** World Kitchen **2.55** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4
11.00 BRDC Formula 4 Championship Highlights **12.00** The Sweeney **1.00** Tour de France Live. The La Course by Le Tour de France. **2.00** Tour de France Highlights **3.00** Tour de France Live. Stage 21 from Evry to the finish line at the Champs-Elysees in Paris. **7.00** The Car Chasers **8.00** Storage Wars Unlocked **9.00** Tour de France Highlights **10.00 Film:** The Outlaw Josey Wales (1976) **12.50** Tour de France Highlights **1.50** River Monsters: Untold Stories **2.45** Movies Now **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen

E4
12.30 How I Met Your Mother **2.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.30** Suburgatory **4.00** The Mindy Project **4.30** New Girl **5.00** The 100 **6.00** Rude(ish) Tube **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00 Film:** X-Men (2000) **10.05** The Big Bang Theory **11.00** Virtually Famous **11.50** Rude Tube **12.55** Ben Earl: Trick Artist

Film4
11.00 The Ladykillers (1955) **1.00** Just Wright (2010) **2.55** Five Children and It (2004) **4.50** Marley and Me (2008) **7.05** The Seeker: The Dark Is Rising (2007) **9.00** Solomon Kane (2010) **11.05** Underworld: Evolution (2006)

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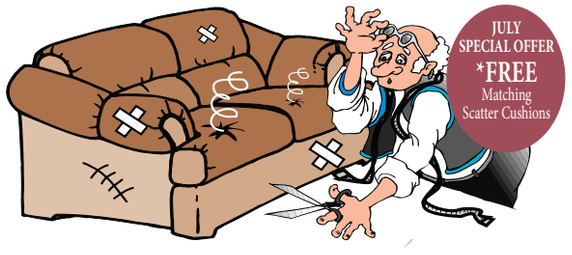

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
On Hostile Ground, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A geologist tries to prevent a huge sinkhole from swallowing New Orleans as the citizens prepare for Mardi Gras. He has a tough time convincing the festival-goers of the danger that threatens them, with many doubting his judgement because he failed to predict a serious event in the past. Action adventure, starring John Corbett, Jessica Steen, Brittany Daniel and Andrew Kraulis. (2000)

TUESDAY
Look Again, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A woman survives an encounter in her home with a masked intruder, who murders her partner. The police quickly apprehend a suspect, but she believes they have arrested someone innocent. When she meets her friend's new man, she becomes convinced he is the real killer. Thriller, starring Morena Baccarin. (2011)

Infamous, Friday, BBC2, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY
Polar Storm, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A comet collides with Earth, causing a devastating series of quakes, floods and volcanic eruptions. However, when the dust has settled, it turns out worse is to come. The impact has pushed the planet off its axis, and if a team of scientists cannot put it right, the crust will shift, wiping out all life. Disaster thriller, starring Jack Coleman and Tyler Johnston. (2009)

THURSDAY
Black Widow, Channel 5, 3.15pm
Photojournalist Melanie becomes jealous when her wealthy male friend gets engaged. But as she tries to dig up some dirt on his fiancee, she realises her love rival may actually be a murderer, who has married a series of rich men and killed them to claim the inheritance. Thriller, starring Elizabeth Berkley. (2008)

FRIDAY
Infamous, BBC2, 11.05pm
Biographical drama focusing on events surrounding Truman Capote's production of his best-selling non-fiction work In Cold Blood, based on the slaughter of a Kansas family. In his quest for fame and success, the American writer becomes transfixed by one of the two killers, and begins to struggle with drink and drug addiction. Starring Toby Jones, Sandra Bullock, Daniel Craig, Sigourney Weaver and Isabella Rossellini. (2006)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Make a note to tune in to Alan's new series

Oh look, it's just what we were all crying out for – another new TV talent show.

But before you get start getting too cynical, this new singing contest does have a twist, and we're not talking about chairs that spin round.

Thanks to a real-time interactive app, the viewing public won't have to listen to the opinions of a panel of expert judges before they are allowed to start voting, but will be able to take complete control of the show themselves.

Perhaps we should let presenter Alan Carr explain it. The Chatty Man says: "When they said it was a singing show, I thought 'No, no, no!' But when I saw this app, I thought it felt really different.

"While the singers are performing their song on the show, they're standing on a conveyer belt called The Track. If you like them, you press 'hit', if you don't you press 'miss'. The more hits they get, they move towards the gold zone, where they could win up to £10,000. Or, if it's all 'Misses', you could disappear backwards through the flaps to a life of misery."

He adds: "But people can't vote unless they've downloaded the app. Well, they can shout at the telly, but it's not going to make a blind bit of difference."

And according to Carr, that's not the only thing that makes The Singer Take It All stand out. For a start, unlike certain other TV talent contests we can name, it definitely won't be taking itself too seriously, or promising to turn anyone into an international superstar.

The comedian says: "We're not saying 'Ten million records.' It's got the same feel to it as when you do karaoke down the pub - there's no pressure, just come and have a go.

"And there's all of that rubbish on the talent shows of 'I don't like you…[pause]… I LOVE you!', 'You're a dark horse, 'This competition just got exciting.' Here there isn't any of that, it's stripped bare. Nobody's cat has just died."

What The Singer Takes It All does have though is a celebrity guest who will give a bit of guidance and feedback – and Carr has some practical advice of his own for the would-be warblers. "I've been on the conveyor belt, and it's very off-putting. When it jolts when you hit a bum note and the audience decides that you're rubbish, and it starts to move, it's really tricky. I would wear flat shoes, that would be my hint."

However, he admits he's in less of a position to give pointers on vocal technique.

"I can either do really low, like Barry White, or high like the Bee Gees or Kate Bush. There's no happy medium with my voice, I'm afraid. Actually, I wanted to sing a song at the end of the show like Cilla Black did on Surprise, Surprise. Strangely, they said no."

At least the contestants are guaranteed to be heard, even if they don't stick around for long.

Alan Carr, The Singer Takes It All, Friday, Channel 4, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Blinging Up Baby
Channel 5, 9pm
Some parents can't really see the point of spending loads on money on their kids' clothing when it's only going to end up covered in food, before being outgrown in a matter of months. But others think nothing of giving their babies and toddlers designer wardrobes and crystal-covered dummies, even though, as this documentary discovers, all that bling comes at a price. Essex student and single mum Sophie May Dixon describes her daughters, four-year-old Princess Bliss Tiana May and one-year-old Precious Bell Ruby Rosina, as 'Barbie babies', but not everyone is impressed with their spray tans and frothy pink dresses – she's been criticised on social media, and her windows have been egged.

Long Lost Family
ITV, 9pm
Family man Richard Cue, 57, has always felt grateful for the love and support he received from his adoptive parents, so he wants to find his birth mother to thank her for the sacrifice she made in giving him up in 1957. Having accessed his records, however, he has been searching for almost a decade with little success. Tania Bartlett's mother Julie fell pregnant to Iranian student Ahmed Kazem in the early 1960s, but the couple drifted apart when Julie felt unable to join Ahmed to start a new life in America. Despite intermittent contact with her father in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Tania has spent the past 30 years searching for him, not knowing if he is even alive. Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell bring these families back together.

TUESDAY
CSI: Crime Scene Investigation
Channel 5, 9pm
A seedy motel, a series of nasty but mysterious murders and a suspect who is clearly mentally ill… Are the members of Las Vegas's premier crime-solving team entering into Alfred Hitchcock territory? It sounds the outline of the plot of Psycho, doesn't it? You'll have to wait and see if the finale involves a bloke dressed up as his mother, but the case certainly leaves the team scratching its collective head. They're called to the Sky View motel after the bodies of Richard and Anne Smith are found there. They're the fourth victims in the space of three months, and the person responsible leads the team on a very grisly trail.

WEDNESDAY
This Old Thing: The Vintage Clothes Show
Channel 4, 8pm
It's the last episode of the series, so will its producers do something a little bit different with the format? Sadly, no – instead, we can expect the same sort of person involved as we've seen for the past five weeks. So meet Lucie, a London lass with seemingly thousands of items of clothing, none of which make her happy. She's got a holiday in Ibiza coming up and is determined to look like a million dollars while standing out from the crowd. She isn't a convert to vintage – yet. But you can bet that host Dawn O'Porter will have persuaded her to try on something at least 20 years old before the closing credits roll.

This Old Thing: The Vintage Clothes Show, Channel 4, 8pm

THURSDAY
Autopsy: The Last Hours of Karen Carpenter
Channel 5, 9pm
In case you didn't know it, Karen Carpenter was half of the brother-and-sister singing sensation The Carpenters. Their feelgood 1970s hits such as Goodbye to Love, Close to You and Rainy Days and Mondays helped make their fortune, and on this side of the Pond they seemed like a permanent fixture on Radio 2. However, behind the scenes, Karen's weight problems left her painfully thin. She collapsed and died 31 years ago; the cause of death was emetine cardiotoxicity – a consequence of anorexia nervosa. With the aid of her autopsy report, Dr Richard Shepherd examines the last few weeks of Karen's life and attempts to unravel what happened on the fateful morning of her death in February 1983.

FRIDAY
The Million Pound Drop
Channel 4, 8pm
This Bafta-winning game show has been running, off and on, for the past four years. Plenty of celebs have graced the show since 2010, including Alan Carr, Emma Bunton, Jonathan Ross, and more recently Stephen and Christopher from Gogglebox. However, it's usually Joe Public who provide the most entertainment as they attempt to boost their coffers and change their lives. This week it's the turn of Geoff and his granddaughter Daniella, and Tom and Lowri from Swansea. Davina McCall hosts.

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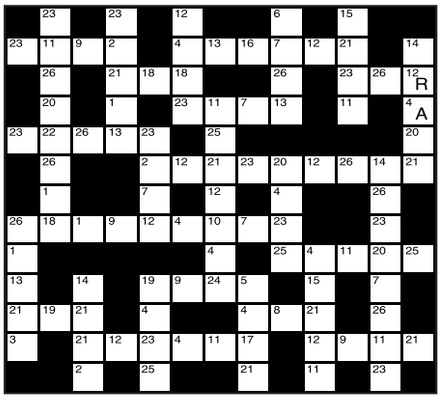
BRAIN GYM No.283

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



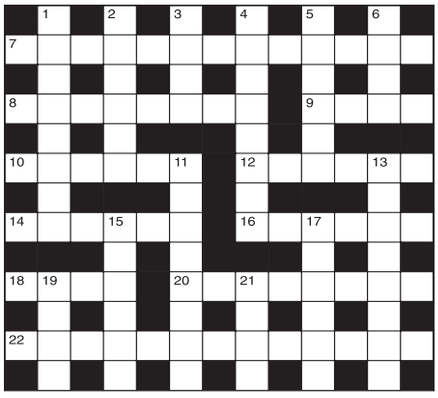
1	14
2	15
3	16
4 A	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12 R	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	L	R	T	D	E	Z	K	I	P	A	C	J
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
G	Q	S	V	M	Y	W	O	F	X	B	U	H

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Writers find it absorbing (8,5)
8. Masterful man I don't have to replace (8)
9. Off it goes to wreak destruction (4)
10. Press for identity documents? (6)
12. It's very hot when it's clear on the hill (6)
14. Dock item (6)
16. Condescends to change the design (6)
18. Cross and discourteous, we hear (4)
20. A love letter disposed to show forbearance (8)
22. It's empowered to remove unwanted growth (8,5)

Down

1. Local tea-place perhaps (8)
2. Knock everybody out (6)
3. Mail order for a city (4)
4. Shaken and upset (8)
5. A bend in the road (6)
6. Miner's union? (4)
11. Lone Royalist, perhaps (8)
13. Switched-on motorists may have it (8)
15. He may go to pot (6)
17. A way of approach that isn't welcomed? (6)
19. Lois becomes a medium (4)
21. It's not the key part of a fire-arm (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

7. Exaggeration (13)
8. Guise (8)
9. Want (4)
10. Soup dish (6)
12. Tattle (6)
14. Feverish (6)
16. Jostle (6)
18. Visage (4)
20. Absurdity (8)
22. Meditation (13)

Down

1. Proposal (8)
2. Squirm (6)
3. Stupefy (4)
4. Power (8)
5. Compensation (6)
6. Formerly (4)
11. Soubriquet (8)
13. Fantasy (8)
15. Agreement (6)
17. Scabbard (6)
19. Particle (4)
21. Invalid (4)

Sudoku

			6		3			
6	1	7				3	4	
	8			1			5	7
		2	4		7	9		
9								6
		4	2		9	5		
	5			4			1	
	2	1		9		8	6	
3			1		8			

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8	9	3	7	1	6	4	5	2
1	7	5	8	4	2	9	6	3
4	2	6	3	5	9	1	8	7
3	5	9	4	6	1	2	7	8
6	1	7	5	2	8	3	4	9
2	4	8	9	3	7	6	1	5
7	6	1	2	8	3	5	9	4
5	8	2	6	9	4	7	3	1
9	3	4	1	7	5	8	2	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Alps; 8 Astronomer; 9 Consider; 10 Type; 12 Poncho; 14 Silver; 15 Risque; 17 Hearts; 18 Were; 19 Turn down; 21 Footballer; 22 Eels. Down: 2 Locomotive; 3 Saws; 4 Studio; 5 Boards; 6 Tortilla; 7 Free; 11 Pretty well; 13 Coquette; 16 Extras; 17 Hurdle; 18 Wife; 20 Dire. QUICK - Across: 1 Pith; 8 Unreadable; 9 Captives; 10 Rich; 12 Appear; 14 Legend; 15 Abject; 17 Pullet; 18 Team; 19 Ill-treat; 21 Four-footed; 22 Ewer. Down: 2 Impalpable; 3 Hunt; 4 Drover; 5 Vassal; 6 Madrigal; 7 Mesh; 11 Conveyance; 13 Evermore; 16 Tailor; 17 Pilots; 18 Tiff; 20 Rude.

Do you organise events?

Get your event listed on all the important sites and publications including The Guardian Guide, Time Out, The List and local press.

Simple, free, and all in one place.

Visit www.listora.me/2014 to list your next event.

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WOLLASTON

LARKHILL ROAD
FOR SALE £149,950
Refurbished property finished to a very high standard.Comprises of: Entrance Hall, Ground Floor WC, Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom. Benefits include: Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front & Rear Gardens, GARAGE.

BRIERLEY HILL

MADISON AVENUE
FOR SALE £149,950
Refurbished Town House. Comprising of: Entrance Hall, Ground Floor WC, Office, Kitchen, Lounge, Three Bedrooms, En Suite Shower, Family Bathroom. Benefits include: Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Off Road Parking, Rear Garden.

QUARRY BANK

WHITE CITY ROAD
FOR SALE £99,950
Semi Detached House with No Upward Chain: Lounge, Modern Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Downstairs WC and Family Bathroom. Benefits include: Gas Central Heating, Off Road Parking, Front and Rear Garden.

WORDSLEY

BRACKEN PARK GARDENS
FOR SALE £69,950
Purpose Built Second Floor Leasehold Apartment Comprising of: Entrance Hall with Store, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom, Bathroom, Benefits Include: Electric Heating, Allocated and Visitors Parking

KINGSWINFORD

MANOR PARK
FOR SALE £119,950
Semi Detached House within Kingswinford to include: Lounge, Kitchen, Inner Hall, Downstairs WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Benefits include: Front and Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking, Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing

UPPER GORNAL

HILL STREET
FOR SALE £74,950
Nicely Presented Leasehold First Floor One Bedroom Flat Comprising of Entrance hall, Lounge, Kitchen with built in cooker, Bedroom, Bathroom, Benefits include Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking

KINVER

DUNSLEY ROAD
FOR SALE £219,950
Semi Detached House in Semi Rural Location, Close to Kinver Village Comprising of: Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Benefits Include: Gas Central Heating, Front & Rear Gardens

WORDSLEY

MEADOW HILL DRIVE
FOR SALE £179,950
Well Presented, Modern Freehold Town House Includes: Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Three Bedrooms (En suite to Master), Family Shower Room. Benefits from: Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Off Road Parking and Rear Garden.

DUDLEY

SALOP STREET
£385 pcm*
Ground Floor Flat. Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, One Bedroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, DSS considered. No Pets.

WALL HEATH

FELLOWS AVENUE
£725 pcm*
Detached Property, Two Reception Rooms, Kitchen/ Diner, Utility Area, WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Large Gardens, Off Road Parking, Garage

BRIERLEY HILL

FISHER STREET
£550 pcm*
Semi-Detached House, Entrance Hall, Lounge with feature fireplace, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with walk-in shower, Three Bedrooms, First Floor Toilet, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking, Rear Garden

KINGSWINFORD

RAGEES ROAD
£350 pcm*
Purpose Built Studio Style Ground Floor Flat, Entrance, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom, Shower Room, Unfurnished, Electric Heating, Communal Gardens, Off Road Parking

KINGSWINFORD

CATESBY DRIVE
£725 pcm*
Semi-Detached House, Entrance, Lounge/Diner, Breakfast Kitchen, Conservatory, Study/Office, WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Gas Central Heating, Single Garage, Parking for 3 Cars, Gardens to Front & Rear.

KINGSWINFORD

CAMBERLEY ROAD
£775 pcm*
Detached House, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Conservatory, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, 2 Single Garages, Ample Off Road Parking, Gardens to Front, Side & Rear, Gas Centrally Heated, Doubled Glazed.

BRIERLEY HILL

WALLOWS ROAD
£595 pcm*
Semi Detached House, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen/ Diner, Shower Room, FOUR BEDROOMS, Bathroom . Off Road Parking, Gardens to Front, Side and Rear, Gas Centrally Heated, Double Glazed

BRIERLEY HILL

CHURCH STREET
£375 pcm*
First Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Off Road Parking

WOLLASTON

KINGSWAY
£550 pcm*
FIRST FLOOR FLAT, Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom, Maintained Communal Gardens, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing.

STOURTON

HYPERION ROAD
£900 pcm*
HOLIDAY COTTAGE TO LET. Furnished to a high standard, fully fitted kitchen. Electric Heating & small log burning stove to lounge. Colour TV and free Wi-Fi. Bathroom with electric shower . Furnished Bedroom with Victorian bed. Secure parking.

LYE

TALBOT STREET
£410 pcm*
Modern Ground Flat, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking, Unfurnished.

BRIERLEY HILL

ADELAIDE STREET
£495 pcm*
Terrace Property, Two Reception Rooms, Refitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Bathroom, Two First Floor Bedrooms, Loft Room, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Rear Garden, Unfurnished

STOURBRIDGE

RIDGE GROVE
£595 pcm*
Semi Detached Property, Lounge, Kitchen, Cloakroom, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens.

TIVIDALE

OAKTHORPE GARDENS
£425 pcm*
Purpose built flat, Lounge, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Electric Heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking

GORNAL

CENTRAL DRIVE
£540 pcm*
Semi Detached House, Lounge/ Diner, Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens

PENSNETT

TANSEY GREEN ROAD
£560 pcm*
Modern Mid Terrace House, Lounge, Kitchen, Downstairs Toilet, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Allocated Parking, Front & Rear Gardens, NO PETS

(Administration/application fees will apply)

NO LET NO FEE NO SALE NO FEE

Main Office: Select House 120 High Street, Amblecote DY8 4DA
60a Manor Park, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 8AG
www.selectsalesandlettings.com

Improved property has luxury accommodation

AN improved three bedroomed luxury semi-detached home in New Birmingham Road, Dudley, is for sale via Bakers at £249,950.

Having a drive, carport and garage it also has a porch, reception hall with under-stairs storage, lounge with a walk-in bay window and period style fire surround, formal dining room. There is a breakfast kitchen, lobby and laundry. Bedroom one has built-in furniture and en-suite. The bathroom includes a corner bath. The landscaped garden has a pond and workshop. Contact Bakers on 01384 252527 or www.bakersproperty.co.uk

This tastefully decorated home has four bedrooms

A TASTEFULLY decorated four bedroomed detached home, 170 Cotwall End Road, Sedgley, is for sale through Roden Boydell at £399,950.

It has gas fired central heating, a porch, reception hall, guest cloakroom, spacious through lounge, a sitting room with open access to the dining room, a breakfast kitchen with a range of integrated appliances, a utility room, a reception room, a family room, a master bedroom en-suite, three further double bedrooms, a bathroom, a garage and impressive grounds that have been landscaped.

The lounge has a fireplace with a wood burning stove and a patio door to the rear garden. The sitting room has an open fireplace and the dining room has a patio door.

Contact 01902 881188 or visit www.rodenboydell.com

Halls 1845

Greenhill Cottage, Prestwood

A wonderful equestrian property comprising a detached and extended cottage set in a semi rural location offering generous accommodation, including various outbuildings such as garages, detached stables and a barn, plus an all weather menage, gym and summerhouse.

- 4 Double Bedrooms
- 4 Reception Rooms
- Kitchen Diner, Laundry Room and Cloakroom
- Detached Double Garage with Room Above
- Further Double Garage
- Gym with Shower Facility
- Detached Stables and Barns
- All Weather Menage, approx. 7 Acre Paddocks
- EPC = D

OFFERS INVITED £1,195,000

Steppe Farm, Harvington

A fantastic opportunity to acquire the most handsome character property sitting in generous gardens with attractive views situated in the most popular semi rural location offering an abundance of charm and with historical interest.

- Grade II Listed Family Home
- 4 Double Bedrooms
- 3 Bathrooms
- Drawing Room and Office
- Sitting and Dining Rooms
- Fitted Family Kitchen
- Garden Room and DETACHED ANNEXE
- Gardens, Garage, Car Port

OFFERS INVITED £750,000

Caunsall Road, Caunsall

A truly wonderful detached Grade II Listed black and white timbered cottage Circa 1450, offering flexible accommodation with fabulous views with the potential opportunity for dividing the property to offer independent annex accommodation.

- Detached 5/6 Bedroom Country Home
- 4 Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen & Utility Room
- Detached Garage
- In and Out Driveway
- Approximately 7 Acres Land Gardens and Paddocks
- River Frontage/Fishing Rights
- Inspection Recommended

OFFERS INVITED £675,000

Oaklands, Waggon Lane, Churchill

Oaklands is a spacious, extended home set in this fabulous and most popular rural location with wonderful accommodation over two floors with generous gardens and paddock with attractive rural views. An option to purchase the adjoining paddock of just over 1.6 acres is available by separate negotiation.

- Detached Extended 4 Bedroom Home
- 2 En-Suites and Separate Shower Room
- Living & Dining Rooms
- Garden Room
- Fitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Utility/Laundry Room and Cloakroom
- Double Garage
- Extensive Gardens and Paddock
- EPC=D

OFFERS INVITED £595,000

Pheasant Run, Curslow Lane, Shenstone

A beautifully presented and spacious detached bungalow with attached independent one bedroom annexe with generous gardens set in this fabulous and popular rural location.

- Detached 3 Bedroom Bungalow
- En-Suite to Master Bedroom
- Living Room with Dining Area
- Garden Room/Conservatory
- Dining Room/ Second Sitting Room
- Kitchen Diner and Utility Room
- Independent One Bedroom ANNEXE
- Generous Gardens and Double Garage
- EPC=E

OFFERS INVITED £525,000

Yew Tree Cottage, Prestwood, Stourbridge

A unique modern detached family home well situated for access for Stourbridge, Wolverhampton, Birmingham and set in a rural location with well-proportioned accommodation.

- 4 Bedrooms
- En-Suite Shower Room
- Family Bathroom
- Fitted Kitchen/Family Room (23'11 x 14'10 max)
- Indoor Heated Swimming Pool
- Gym Area
- Detached Double Garage
- Gardens and Paddock
- Stables and Approximately 1.5 Acres
- EPC = F

OFFERS INVITED £489,950

3 The Croft, Kidderminster

A beautifully presented modern detached family residence, quietly set in this most popular private and mature cul-de-sac in one of the more sought after residential locations on the outskirts of Kidderminster.

- Detached 5 Bedroom Home
- Master Bedroom En-suite
- Family Bathroom
- Living Room and Office
- Fitted Dining Kitchen
- Utility Room and Cloakroom
- Double Garage
- Off Road Parking
- Beautiful Private Gardens

OFFERS INVITED £419,950

Blakebrook, Kidderminster

A beautiful character family home in wonderful condition, having been extended and particularly well situated within one of Kidderminster's most popular and sought after residential locations.

- 4 Bedroom Semi Detached
- Feature Bathroom
- Spacious Living and Dining Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Extended Family Room
- Garden Room and Cloakroom
- Private Gardens
- Generous Parking and Garage
- EPC = E

OFFERS INVITED £349,995

Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster

A beautifully presented immaculate detached family home conveniently located in this elevated position.

- Modern Detached Family Home
- 4 Bedrooms
- 2 Bathrooms
- 2 Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Ground Floor Cloakroom
- Private Gardens
- Off Road Parking
- Detached Garage
- EPC = D

OFFERS INVITED £235,000

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DRIVETIME

New Scout joins the range

Fully prepared and always ready for an adventure – the latest model to join the Octavia range is a true Scout in every sense.

Building on the strengths of its acclaimed predecessors, the second-generation Skoda Octavia Scout is a unique all-rounder that combines off-road ability with exemplary on-road refinement and the brand's famous practicality.

Priced from £25,315, the new Octavia Scout features an advanced, fifth-generation Haldex clutch transmission, along with sector-best levels of interior space and a host of safety and comfort systems. Yet despite a significant increase in size and specification, the new Octavia is 20 percent cleaner and more fuel-efficient than the previous model, delivering significant running-cost savings for owners.

Two engines and transmissions are available from launch: a 2.0 TDI 150PS with a six-speed manual gearbox and a 2.0 TDI 184PS featuring a six-speed DSG as standard. The former returns 55.4mpg on the combined cycle and has CO2 emissions of 129g/km, while the range-topping model returns 55.4mpg and has CO2 emissions of 134g/km.

In addition to its off-road ability, the new Octavia Scout offers all the acclaimed safety and comfort features of the standard model. All models are available with up to nine airbags and Crew Protection Assistant for vehicle safety in crash situations and Driver fatigue sensor.

A number of electronic comfort systems are available as options. These include: Intelligent Light Assistant and Park Assist. The Scout can also be supplied with a new rear-view parking camera.

Based on the Octavia Estate, the Scout has been an integral part of the Octavia range since its introduction in 2007. Between 2007 and the end of 2013, SKODA delivered around 53,600 Octavia Scouts to customers worldwide. This represents almost eight percent of all Octavia Estates delivered during this period.

WHY PAY MORE THAN £99 YEAR ON YOUR CAR INSURANCE?‡

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NEW CORSA Limited Edition 1.2 3dr

Free Insurance 21-75yr olds** — **£199 DEPOSIT***
£99 Insurance 18-20yr olds^ — **£199 PER MONTH**
3 Years 0% APR Finance

Based on 8,000 miles per annum

Cash price	£14,650.00	35 monthly payments	£199.00
Customer Deposit	£199.00	1 final payment	£5,035.00
Deposit contribution	£2,451.00	Total amount payable	£14,650.00
Amount of credit	£12,000	APR Representative	0%

Specification includes:
- 17-inch black twin-spoke alloy wheels
- Body-colour, sports, front lower spoiler, side sills, rear lower skirt and rear spoiler
- Sports suspension
- Front fog lights • Tinted windows
- Air conditioning • Sports-style front seats
- Sports pedals • Cruise control

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£99 PER MONTH
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Ts & Cs apply

NEW ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV
ONLY
£11,995
SAVE
£7,255

Finance Example: Adam Jam 1.2, Cash Price £11,730, Customer deposit £2,214.32, Vauxhall deposit contribution £1,340, 23 monthly payments £99, GFV £6,310, Total amount payable £12,141.32, based on 8,000 miles per annum, 2.9% APR. Mokka 1.4 Turbo Exclusiv Cash Price £17,525, Customer Deposit £3,500 (including Vauxhall Contribution £915), Amount Financed £14,025, 35 Monthly Payments £199.24, One Payment £7,992, Amount Payable £18465.40. Interest £940.40 APR 2.9% based on 5,000 miles per annum.

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Halesowen Motor House
West Midlands
0121 462 2916

Stourbridge Motor House
Stourbridge
01384 672918

T Wall Garages
Kingswinford
01384 672909

LIFETIME WARRANTY 100,000 MILE

VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 91.1 (3.1), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 85.6 (3.3). CO2 emissions: 373 - 88g/km.

Available on selected models only, at participating Retailers. Conditional Sale. *Finance subject to status. Terms and Conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Finance supplied by Vauxhall Finance, PO Box 6666, Cardiff, CF15 7YT. ‡First year insurance offer available on Corsa Excite and Limited Edition models only. All drivers must have held a valid full UK licence for a minimum of 1 year. All policies are underwritten by Ageas Insurance Ltd. Other insurance specific Terms and Conditions apply. **The offer will cover the full premium for drivers aged between 21-75 (motor policy only). Only available through Vauxhall Insurance. ^Drivers aged 18-20 will make a contribution of £99 to their premium and must agree to the fitting of a telematics box to the car: every 3 months, your policy will be reviewed and if you drive well, we will return part of this to you. The policy may be cancelled for consistently poor driving. Only available through ingenie. Vauxhall Lifetime warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Terms and conditions apply. Offers available on orders or registrations between 2 July and 1 October 2014. We can introduce you to a limited number of finance providers, commission may be received. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

Join the electric revolution

The Ampera is no ordinary electric car. It is a stylish, high specification vehicle in the premium class.

The Ampera is designed to give you mile after mile of trouble-free motoring, long and short – while reducing running costs and exhaust pipe emissions.

It delivers the kind of performance and handling that ensure it is a pleasurable driving experience as well as offering comfort in its luxurious interior.

The Ampera combines limitless electric performance with a premium driving experience. Easy to charge at home and on the road with the UK's new and growing charging-station network.

The electric motor drives the wheels and has a supplementary petrol driven generator to keep the batteries charged whilst in operation. This leads to a range in excess of 300 miles, reassuring for the driver.

Whether you're a private customer or a company-car driver the Ampera is great value.

With up to £5,000 government grant subsidy to add to the Greenhous Vauxhall competitive pricing you can, thanks to the Vauxhall partners program, drive away an Ampera for just £22,995.

An approved used Ampera could be yours for as little as £19,999.

The Ampera has a Voltec E-FLEX, Electric engine with only 27g/km CO2 emissions. So it is free of vehicle road tax.

Motor Market

Best Value, Choice and Customer Service

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10 Reg BMW 3 Series £8495 or £40 pw

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10 Reg Megane Coupe £5795 or £27 pw

06 Reg Mini One £5495 or £25pw

06 Reg Fiesta Climate £2995 or £13pw

07 Reg 207 HDi Sport £3995 or £18pw

06 Reg Astra Cabriolet £4495 or £21pw

57 Reg Mini Clubman D £7495 or £35 pw

10 Reg 207 SW HDi Sport £5495 or £25 pw

08 Reg Golf 1.9 TDi £6995 or £33 pw

56 Reg 207 1.4 Sport £3995 or £18 pw

58 Reg 1.5DCi Scenic £4495 or £21 pw

59 Reg Seat Leon TDi £6795 or £32pw

10 Reg Honda Civic CTDi £7295 or £35 pw

57 Reg Skoda 1.9 TDi £4995 or £23pw

11 Reg Astra CDTi Est £9495 or £45pw

Finance Example - Cash Price £4995. Less Cash or Part Exchange Deposit £500. Amount of Credit £4495. Total Amount Payable £5999.20. 60 Monthly Payments of £99.82 or 260 Weekly Payments of £23.04.

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LIFETIME

WARRANTY 100,000 MILE

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Halesowen Motor House
West Midlands
0121 462 2916

Dudley Motor Company
West Midlands
01384 454100

Stourbridge Motor House
Stourbridge
01384 672918

VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 91.1 (3.1), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 85.6 (3.3). CO_2 emissions: 373 - 88g/km.#

On the road prices include number plates, delivery, Vehicle Excise Duty, first registration fee and VAT. Offers available on orders or registrations between 2 July and 1 October 2014 subject to availability and are available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). Savings shown are against list price at time of publication, for details refer to Vauxhall's current price guide. All other sales categories are excluded; cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks. UK-supplied vehicles only. Vauxhall Lifetime Warranty covers lifetime ownership of first registered keeper, 100,000 mile limit. Terms and conditions apply. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

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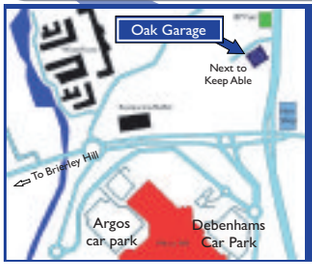

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Help to spot used car faults

In a new survey by HPI, the provider of www.hpicheck.com, 73 per cent of people said they have the confidence to conduct their own mechanical inspection when checking out a potential used car purchase.

However, warns HPI, the harsh reality is that around four out of five used cars sold privately have at least one fault, with an average rectification cost of £225.

For just £99, an HPI Inspection will give buyers peace of mind that the car they are looking to buy will be checked by a mechanical expert.

What's more, the HPI Inspection can further reduce the stress out of bagging a bargain by negotiating the price with the seller to ensure the buyer doesn't pay over the odds.

Senior consumer services manager at www.hpicheck.com, Shane Teskey, says: "A surprisingly 23 per cent of people we surveyed admitted to having complete faith in the seller when they bought their last car, and therefore, felt an independent inspection wasn't necessary.

"Shiny paintwork and a bargain price can hide a multitude of sins, from minor problems, which could impact the value of the vehicle and lead to mounting repair costs, to major mechanical faults that pose a danger.

"We think it's better to be safe than sorry. Don't gamble with your money and your safety by buying a vehicle without having an expert cast their eye over it first."

Unlike similar services available, the HPI Inspection can be tailor-made depending on the car buyer's needs. All inspections are conducted by a qualified engineer, who can also negotiate the price of the vehicle based on what they find. By checking over 200 individual items on a car, HPI's engineers are helping consumers choose a vehicle that's safe and that won't cost them an arm and a leg in future repairs.

Shane Teskey adds, "An HPI Inspection is easy and hassle free and could save used car buyers thousands of pounds by helping them avoid a banger dressed up as a bargain."

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As a founding manufacturer in the programme, Ford is delighted to have supplied over half a million Motability vehicles to date.

Ford has been commended by Motability Operations for its performance and excellence in the charity's annual Supplier Awards. Motability Operations manages the Motability Scheme for more than 600,000 disabled people and their families.

Ford is one of the largest suppliers of vehicles to Motability. This means Ford accounts for one in five of the vehicles delivered via the Motability scheme.

We know that having a car can give you the freedom of independence. With Ford Motability, we can also provide you with real freedom of choice, with an extensive range of award-winning cars that deliver versatility and roominess without compromising on performance, driveability or style.

You can also take advantage of the largest support network of any vehicle manufacturer and benefit from the service of over 1,000 dedicated Ford Motability specialists, including Furrows in Shropshire.

Ford Motability has a wide range of practical and stylish vehicles, one of which is sure to suit your needs. Ford Motability Offers are available until September 30, 2014. Motability accredited dealers will be able to help you select the best model for you and arrange for you to take a test drive – or test ride, if you're not going to be driving yourself.

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Fuel consumption figures for the Jazz Si Black Special Edition in mpg (l/100km): Urban 42.2 (6.7), Extra Urban 57.7 (4.9), Combined 50.4 (5.6). CO_2 emissions: 129 g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes & may not reflect real-life driving experience.
Model Shown: Jazz Si Black Special Edition Manual in Crystal Black Pearl at £15,445 On The Road (OTR). **Terms & conditions:** New retail Jazz registered from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2014. Subject to model & colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers & are at the promoter's absolute discretion. **Deposit contribution:** £500 Honda deposit contribution on Jazz models (excludes Jazz S & SE grades) purchased through Honda Aspirations. **Jazz Si Black Special Edition Honda Aspirations (PCP):** Example shown based on Jazz Si Black Special Edition Manual in Crystal Black Pearl at £15,445 total cash price (& total amount payable) with 25 months 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £0 customer deposit + £500 deposit contribution, (£500 total deposit), Amount of Credit £14,945, £365.05 monthly payment, Guaranteed Future Value/Optional Final Payment of £6,203.75 annual mileage of 10,000 and excess mileage charge: 3p per mile. You do not have to pay the Final Payment if you return the car at the end of the agreement & you have paid all other amounts due, the vehicle is in good condition & has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book & the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. Honda Finance Europe Plc. is authorised & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Financial Services Register number 312541. The 5 Year Care Package includes: **Servicing:** All scheduled servicing, as detailed in the vehicles service book, will be covered for 5 years or 62,500 miles, whichever comes first. **Warranty:** In addition to the standard 3 year warranty the customer will receive a complimentary 2 year extended guarantee taking the warranty to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **Roadside Assist:** In addition to the standard 3 years roadside assistance package the customer will receive complimentary Hondacare Assistance for a further 2 years, taking it to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **The 5 Year Care Package:** The 5 Year Care Package is optional. It is **being offered for £555 including VAT** (usual value £1,545 including VAT, resulting in a £990 saving for the customer) & is available to finance or non-finance customers. Please note, should you sell the vehicle during the period of cover, the package remains with the vehicle.

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5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

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business directory

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THREE LARGE bedroom house, near Bilston Town, garage, carpet, CH, DG, £525pcm. 07886 781724.

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8 Motoring

cars over £1500

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BMW Z3 1.9, Special Edition, bright red, power hood, AC, walnut centre console, 1998 reg, 46k, lady owner, FSH, £3,500. 07460 477252.

FIAT GRANDE PUNTO 2007, 34,000 miles, black, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, service history, long MoT, central locking, pas, tax, CD.
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07980 956167.

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1.1 PETROL, 2008,
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NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 1.4, 08, 80k miles, blue, alloys, 6 months tax, full MoT, good condition. £3,500 ono. 07934 228031.

PEUGEOT 207 1.4 petrol, 5 door hatchback, black, 27,000 miles, full MoT, excellent condition, £1,995. 07932 963381.

PEUGEOT 307 CONVERTIBLE 2.0, 2004, leather interior, almost fsh. Call for more details, £2,000 o.n.o. 07455 022100.

RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE, 2005, 50,400 miles, Tempest blue, air con, fsh, MoT, one owner, tax, £1,750 ono. 07912 305688.

RENAULT MEGANE SCENIC FIDJI 1600cc, 02, 67k miles, F1 engineered, long tax and test with guarantee. £2,000. 01952 750878

TOYOTA YARIS TR, 2008, petrol, 56,000 miles, metallic grey, fsh, long MoT, one owner, tax, £4,300 ono. 01902 771632.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 2005, Silver met, AC, CL, low mileage, full MoT and tax. £1,900 ono. 01902 755072 / 07990 513259.

VAUXHALL ASTRA SRi 1.6, black, 2010, 5Dr, 46,000 miles, full MoT, 6 months tax, £6,000 o.n.o. 07989 318567.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0, 3dr, black, 56 reg new shape, 85,000 miles, MoT and tax, drives like new, £2,525. 07850 113660.

VAUXHALL CORSA Club, 1.4 Automatic, blue, 58 reg, 32k, 5dr, good all round, £4,500. 01902 567630.

VAUXHALL CORSA Energy 1.3CDTi, Ecoflex, 2010, 29K miles, metallic silver, 5-dr, tax, MoT, AC, EW, alloys, £5,000, 01902 850173.

VAUXHALL MERIVA
EXCLUSIV 1.4
16v, 2011, 20,500 miles, dark grey, long MoT. Well priced for quick sale. Very good condition, illness forces sale.
£6,100 ono.
07836 734360.

VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8 07 reg., blue, 10 months MoT, reliable, very good condition. £1,700 ono. 07986 725648.

VOLVO S80
2005, I have owned this car from new and it has been extremely reliable.
£2,000.
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VW BORA 1.9 TDi, 03, excellent condition, FSH, 12 months MoT, tax, 76k, good MPG, CL, EW, AC, any trial, £1,900. 07812 907859.

VW POLO 1.2, 2006, 3dr, MoT January 2015, 108,000 miles, built in hands free kit, ideal first car, £1,800. 07708 030163.

VW POLO 1.2 Manual, 2005, 3dr, red, 66,000 miles, MoT January 15, very good condition, reliable, £1,775 ono. 07807 494097.

cars under £1500

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BMW 520iSE R reg., MoT early Dec, 98k, Auto, excellent condition for year, £550. 01902 677102.

CITY ROVER 03 reg, 1.4, 45,810 miles, full MoT, good runner, £425 ono. 07719 923101.

FIAT PUNTO DYNAMIC 1.2L 05 reg, turquoise, 12 months MoT, 3 months tax, 4 new tyres, good condition.
£1,095.
07580 501183.

FORD FIESTA FREESTYLE Y reg., 1.25 Zetec, 4dr, only 29,000 miles, FSH, tax, MoT, stunning, indistinguishable from new condition inside and out, steel blue.
£1,250
07455 595966.

FORD FOCUS 1.6 Ghia, 02 reg, 88,000 miles, tax end Aug, MoT Nov, excellent condition. £1,295. 07807 001994 / 01902 700421.

FORD KA 2, V reg, in blue, 34,000 miles, 1 former keeper, 12 months MoT, 8 months tax, excellent condition, £695. 07804 831294.

FORD KA 52 reg, 03, black, MoT, tax, new exhaust/tyres and brakes, 65,000 miles, good condition, £795. Please call 077728 86052.

GOLF GTi T, 51 reg, 12 months MoT, immaculate condition, black, £1,450. o.n.o. 07804 563445.

HYUNDAI AMICA 1.0, 2002, silver, MoT to March 2015, 41,000 miles, good condition, ideal first car, £699 o.n.o. 07538 537321.

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£695 ono.
07769 321934.

MAZDA MX5 SPORTS 1.6, J reg., low mileage, 11 months MoT, new hood (cost £350). reluctant sale, £750 o.n.o 07980 430350.

MGF SPORTS 1999, 12 months MoT, tax end Sept, no overheating problems, very fast. £725 ono. 01384 626389.

MGF Very good condition, red, leather seats, 73,000 miles, loads of history, genuine reason for sale, £1,450 ono. Call 07773 437007.

NISSAN ALMERA 03, 1.5, 7 months tax, 8 months MoT, great condition, must be seen, genuine inquiries only. £1,195. ono 01384 443251.

NISSAN MICRA 2-dr, 1999, 12 months MoT, 72K miles, recent tyres, all round very good condition, £395 o.n.o. 01902 741546.

PEUGEOT 106 XR 1.4, R reg, 79k, new MoT, two owners, Red, smart, useful cheap car. £450 ono. George 01889 582030 Rugeley.

PEUGEOT 107 12 months MoT, 55 reg, £20 tax, good learner car, £1,250 ono. 01384 569677.

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PEUGEOT 206CC, 2004, 44,000 miles, silver/blue, electric windows, MoT, CD, leather interior, £1,400 ono. 07751 046777.

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01902 342812.

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ROVER 100 KENSINGTON. 1996, 44,000 miles. Tax & MoT till Oct. Good runner. £250. 0121 556 4403

ROVER 214SEi 1995, nightfire red, s/roof, alloys, leather, low miles, 12 mnths MoT, excellent. £550 ono. 01902 790679 / 07768 642821.

ROVER 25 1.4. 02 reg. only 31,000 miles, Tax and MoT. Immaculate. £950. 07751 552389.

ROVER 45 Connoisseur Turbo Diesel, 2005, 5dr, 9 months MoT, 7 months Tax, £825 ono. 07791 531018. Stourbridge.

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TOYOTA COROLLA 2001, 5dr, hatchback, silver, very good condition, taxed, MoT. £850. 01902 682471.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4, 5 door, 88k, red, pas, tax, 12 months MoT, s/h, 2 former keepers, 1997, £550. Telephone 07976 300302.

LOOK
VAUXHALL MERIVA
2004, 80,000 miles, silver, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, 11 months MoT, metallic paint, central locking, pas, 6 months tax, CD.
£13,500 ono.
01902 887215.

VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8, 2004, full MoT, 6 months Tax, four new tyres, nice condition, very clean. £1,100. 07757 764279 / 01922 440428.

VW POLO 1600SE ESTATE, 02 reg, 63,000 miles, tax, long MoT, as new, buy back guarantee, £1,300 ono. 01952 750878.

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RENAULT KANGOO 1.5 diesel van, white, 87,000 miles, 12 months MoT, very clean, reliable, stereo, £900 ono. 07811 702650.

RENAULT KANGOO VAN, 54 reg, white, good condition, MoT, tax, £850 ono. Telephone 01902 744409.

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Glassboys welcome Whitby for first game

STOURBRIDGE will have a busy start to the new Evo-Stik Premier season with two games inside the first three days.

The Glassboys begin the campaign by entertaining Whitby Town on August 16 before going to Ilkeston 48 hours later. August Bank Holiday sees a home derby against Rushall Olympic, with the reverse fixture on New Year's Day.

Gary Hackett's men host Halesowen Town on Boxing Day and will go to The Grove on Easter Monday.

They finish with a trip to Skelmersdale United on April 25.

Stourbridge:
Aug 16 Whitby(H)
Aug 18 Ilkeston FC(A)
Aug 23 Kings Lynn(A)
Aug 25 Rushall O(H)
Aug 30 Workington(A)

Sep 02 Nantwich(H)
Sep 06 Trafford(A)
Sep 09 Belper Town(H)
Sep 16 Barwell(A)
Sep 20 Curzon Ash(H)
Sep 27 Blyth Spars(A)

Oct 04 Ashton Utd (H)
Oct 07 Witton A(A)
Oct 11 Grantham(A)
Oct 14 Stamford(H)
Oct 18 Matlock(A)
Oct 21 Belper Town(A)
Oct 25 Frickley Ath(H)
Oct 28 Nantwich(A)

Nov 04 Ilkeston(H)
Nov 08 Marine(A)
Nov 18 Barwell(H)
Nov 22 FC Utd Man(H)
Nov 29 Buxton(A)

Dec 06 Skel–dale(H)
Dec 13 Kings Lynn(H)
Dec 20 Whitby(A)
Dec 26 Halesowen(H)

2015
Jan 01 Rushall O(A)
Jan 03 Witton A(H)
Jan 10 Ashton Utd (A)
Jan 17 Grantham(H)
Jan 24 Stamford(A)
Jan 31 Matlock(H)

Feb 07 Frickley Ath(A)
Feb 14 Trafford(H)
Feb 21 Ramsbottom(H)
Feb 28 Curzon A(A)

Mar 07 Blyth Spar(H)
Mar 14 Ramsbottom(A)
Mar 28 FC Utd Man(A)

Apr 04 Workington(H)
Apr 06 Halesowen(A)
Apr 11 Marine(H)
Apr 18 Buxton(H)
Apr 25 Skel-dale Utd(A)

Fans bail out Harriers club with £21,500

Football

SUPPORTERS have bailed out Kidderminster Harriers in the face of 'unexpected financial challenges'.

Kidderminster Harriers Independent Supporters Trust (KHIST) agreed to invest £21,500 in return for a transfer of shares.

The crisis comes after the Harriers failed to secure additional cash from investors following their failed bid to win promotion last season, and two years after the club staved off administration.

An official club statement announced that following the failed promotion bid, not all of the investment it hoped to secure would be paid. The statement said events during the last month meant that money 'contractually committed' to the club by certain directors for the 2013-14 season 'has not been forthcoming despite written assurances to the contrary'.

"Recent events with other clubs this summer has illustrated how difficult it can be to run a lower league football club .

It added: "Therefore, notwithstanding any historical financial contributions, the failure to meet these most recent and, to date, unfulfilled commitments, which the directors had relied on in pushing for promotion last season, has caused unexpected financial challenges.

"The club remains very positive about the forthcoming season, and the directors are keen to achieve a speedy resolution in this matter."

The club says that in the meantime it is seeking legal advice.

As part of the deal, the KHIST board have invested £21,000 in the club.

The supporters' trust has also put forward an application to make the club's Aggborough Stadium a community asset, meaning that the building will be protected, but will have to pay for the club to be maintained. A statement from the group's spokesperson, Abi Harper, on its website said: "The KHIST board has recently been made aware of a short-term cash flow challenge and of the circumstances surrounding that.

"The Trust is fully supportive and will work closely with the club in an effort to provide financial support and has invested £21,500 in return for shares."

Club runners take on Iron Man contest

STOURBRIDGE Running Club had a great turnout of 20 runners taking part in the Worcestershire Mid-week race in Droitwich.

First over the line in the 10k race was Kevin Burke with a time of 39.32. Robert Colman was next with 41.22, Adrew Boardman 42.35, Steven Burch 42.50 and Adam Crompton who had a Personal Best time of 43.26.

Joan Clarke was the second female over the line for her category with a time of 45.38. The club also had runners at the lesser known Timberhonger 10k race, held in Bromsgrove.

Kieran Pitt was first for the club with a time of 45.53. He was closely followed by Colin Downey (49.40) and Lucy Dawkins (56.17).

And we also had a good show of runners at the Worcester Pitchcroft 10k race – held at Worcester Racecourse and hosted by Worcester Athletic Club, this race incorporated the Worcester County Championships. Pete Walters was 21st over the line out of 223 runners with a time of 38.52. Next was Steven Burch 43.22, Ben Loach 44.26, Joan Clarke 45.39 who was also second female in the F50 category, Colin Downey 46.49, Steve Moss 48.11, Philip Elwell 49.38 and Lucy Dawkins 56.57.

There were also two fantastic achievements from Tony Warner and Mike Anslow for completing the Ironman UK race in Bolton at the weekend.

Mike Anslow Overall Rank: 240th– Swim: 1.22.43; Bike: 5.47.42; Run: 4.19.46

Overall: 11hrs 42.20

Running

Tony Warner Overall Rank: 566th– Swim: 1.16.52; Bike: 6.52.12; Run: 4.27.45; Overall: 12hr 48.20, Tony was fourth in his age catogory.

Stourbridge Running Club is hosting its first Beer Mile Race. The club will be using the historic Cinder athletic track which lies under the cricket and football pitches and gives the War memorial Athletics ground back one of its original purposes – for a couple of evenings at least.

The event is strictly limited to 60 places over two evenings choice of Wednesday August 20 or 27.

On both evenings the time trial event will start at 6.45 pm. Entry to the Beer Mile Rug Chunder Run, to give its official name, is £10 and includes the four glasses of Enville ale.

Entry is open to all over 18 not just club members but its strictly first come first served. email dave.sheppard46@blueyonder.co.uk if you would like to enter, or phone 07711 682342 or entry form on Stourbridge running clubs website.

Hopes of a play-off spot fade for Wolves

Chris Harris takes a tumble in the very first race at Monmore Green. *Picture: John Hipkiss.*

PATCHED-UP Wolverhampton saw their play-off hopes dealt another crushing blow as they slumped to a 46-44 defeat against Lakeside at Monmore Green on Monday.

Without Tai Woffinden and Ty Proctor, Wolves suffered a last-gasp defeat which all but ends their top four chances.

In a clash described by boss Peter Adams as "must win", a series of mistakes and dropped points eventually proved costly. The hosts saw their night get off to the worst possible start as they conceded a 5-1 in heat one – yet they soon battled back to open up a four-point advantage after four races.

However, they threw away points as Chris Harris fell from third place in heat five and Jacob Thorssell was overtaken by Mikkel Bech in heat six. Lakeside duly capitalised with a huge maximum to move back onto level terms – and although Wolves briefly recaptured the lead they saw key man Piotr Pawlicki suffer a costly blown engine in heat 11.

Wolves 44: Ricky Wells 12, Piotr Pawlicki 10, Joe Jacobs 7, Jacob Thorssell 6+2, Max Fricke 5+1, Tom Perry 2, Chris Harris 2.

Lakeside 46: Davey Watt 12, Adam Ellis 9+1, Mikkel Bech 7+2, Richard Lawson 7+1, Kim Nilsson 6+3, Ben Barker 5, Ben Morley 0.

Players repeat victory on boards

STOURBRIDGE Chess Club have repeated their win in the annual post-season friendly Tony Evers match against Halesowen at the Stourbridge Institute.

The match was over 11 boards. On paper it looked like Stourbridge should win as they out-graded their opponents on most boards. Stourbridge put in a tremendous performance to win the match 7½-3½ – the same as the last two years. It would have been an even worse defeat if Stourbridge had not loaned Craig Hutton who won on board 11,

The individual results were: 1. Nic Fallowfield 176 1– Mike Hadley (154) 0; 2. Julie Wilson 151 ½ – Don Curry (139) ½; 3. Tony Shaw 126 ½ – Jon Asbury (126) ½; 4. Jeremy Humphries 119 1 – Paul Evans (116) 0; 5. Colin Woodall 112 1 – Maureen Clark (109) 0; 6. Jet Ajimal 109 ½ – John Southcote (98) ½; 7. Chris Williamson 103 0 – Logan Gregory (U) 1; 8. Sam Bradley 103 1 – Chris Haddon (70) 0; 9. Martin Berridge 84 1 – Andrew Field (64) 0; 10. Dave Scriven 136 1 – Joyce Evans (61) 0; 11. Simon To UG 0 – Craig Hutton 1

The next round of Stourbridge's Summer tournament is on July 23.

Tonev and Luna miss out on tour

ALEKSANDAR Tonev and Antonio Luna are on the verge of leaving Villa after being left out of the squad for the tour of the US.

Villa boss Paul Lambert has decided to leave the duo out of the travelling party for the trip to Texas as he looks to move last summer's signings out.

Left-back Luna is being strongly linked with a move to Italian side Verona having fallen down the pecking order at Villa Park, with Kieran Richardson, Enda Stevens and Joe Bennett set to battle it out for the full-back berth.

Tonev also looks to be on his way out of the club after failing to impress following his move from Lech Poznan last summer.

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Yeltz hit by first loss in months

Halesowen 1
AFC Wulfrunians 3

HALESOWEN tasted defeat for the first time since March, as they slumped 3-1 to Wolverhampton side AFC Wulfrunians.

Halesowen made two changes to the side that started against Romulus, as Sam Pearson took Matt Sargeant's place in goal, and Mark Danks replaced Aaron Griffiths, who could only get a spot on the bench.

It was the Wulfs who got the scoring underway with a converted penalty in the 26th minute. They doubled their lead on the 40th minute, as Wulfrunians broke away and the poor conditions allowed them to a hit a shot, which Pearson failed to deal with as he watched the ball roll under his arms into the net.

Halesowen gave themselves a lifeline in the 70th minute, as Chris Lait's powerful free kick made The Wulfs keeper drop the ball into the path of James Oliver, who easily tapped the ball past him into the net.

But Wulfrunians regained their two goal lead three minutes later, as a curling free kick flew over the wall and left Pearson strandedYeltz starters: Pearson, Green, Kettle, Tilt, Charlton, Mackenzie, Till, Turner, Tonks, Haseley, Danks

Gamboa aims to make mark

ALBION transfer target Cristian Gamboa says he is ready to make his mark in one of Europe's top leagues.

The Baggies, who were expected to confirm the loan signing of Liverpool defender Andre Wisdom this week, are also in talks with Norwegian side Rosenborg over a £2m deal for Costa Rica right-back Gamboa.

And the 24-year-old says he is ready to try his luck in the Premier League.

"After the World Cup, I'm ready for the next step, to go to a better league," said Gamboa, who figured in all of his country's games at Brazil 2014. "I respect Rosenborg, I am grateful to everyone who helped me here, but right now a transition to a better league is the best for the family and my career.

"I really hope it will go in order in a matter of days," he added.

Pitmen hold the Harriers to goalless draw

Hednesford Town 0
Kidderminster Harriers 0

Football

HEDNESFORD Town held Conference side Kidderminster Harriers to a goalless draw at a soggy Keys Park.

New signing Steve Diggin missed a glorious chance for Hednesford on the half-hour mark, side-footing wide from Paul McCone's knockdown.

Harriers winger Marvin Johnson should have scored shortly afterwards but dragged his shot wide.

McCone headed over from a corner just before the break and Tom Thorley went close again for the hosts before Johnson was denied by Dan Crane.

The impressive Danny Glover forced Jasbir Singh into a smart save with three minutes left and, with the last kick, substitute Alex Melbourne threw himself at a clearance only to see the ball fly inches wide.

In other matches,Chasetown threw away the lead to go down 2-1 at Quorn.

The Scholars started well and new signing Richard Davies was first to test the home side with a low shot which keeper Laurie Pearson pushed behind.

Nick Wellecomme, with two goals in two pre-season starts, then shot narrowly wide.

The visitors took a deserved lead in the 21st minute when John Bateman's kick was flicked on by Wellecomme and Nathan Waite rounded Pearson and fired home. Quorn levelled three minutes into the second half when Louis Dodd drilled home from a short corner. And the hosts grabbed a deserved winner when substitute Liam Read beat Bateman with a low shot.

Dan Cope bagged a hat-trick as Stafford Rangers' youngsters thrashed Edgware Town 5-0.

Cope's heroics were followed by a second-half brace from 17-year-old Louis Downes as the Neil Kitching's side dominated. Cope scored after four minutes when he finished from a Ryan Edmunds corner.

Three minutes later it was 2-0 when Cope netted from the spot after Alex Curtis was brought down by Mark Guildea.

Cope slotted home his and Stafford's third in the 52nd minute before substitute Downes took centre stage as the visitors tired.

LATE GOAL LEVELS GLASSBOYS GAME

Stourbridge 1 Kidderminster Harriers 1

A LATE goal from summer signing Alex Dallison enabled the Glassboys to hold their higher division opponents to a draw.

The match was played in front of a healthy attendance of 643 at the War Memorial Athletic Ground.

Harriers enjoyed the greater possession early on and in the third minute Reece Styche dragged a low angled shot narrowly wide of Dean Coleman's right-hand post.

Seven minutes later Michael Gash met a left-wing centre from Marvin Johnson with a side-footed volley that flew over the bar and soon afterwards Callum Gittings also volleyed over from a Gash cross.

Measured

Stourbridge, prompted by their captain Sean Geddes, offered more as the half wore on and on 26 minutes it was Geddes who worked a one-two with Will Richards before sliding a measured pass into the feet of Matt Wood on the left-hand side of the box, however he screwed his shot the wrong side of Jasbir Singh's near upright.

Nine minutes later Richards laid the ball off to Kyle Haynes on his right who thumped a low 30-yard shot past the post.

Harriers started the second period brightly and on 47 minutes Styche picked out sub Craig Reid with his ball in from the left, but he shot straight at Dean Coleman.

Football

However, three minutes later the Conference Premier side opened the scoring with Gash squaring the ball across to Aman Verma and the former Corby Town man beat the diving Coleman away to his left with a crisp low drive from around 25 yards out.

Stourbridge looked to respond and on 56 minutes Dallison headed wide at the far post from a deep right-wing corner by sub Ben Billingham.

The usual raft of substitutions by both sides then followed before the hosts again went close in the 75th minute.

Five minutes from time the lively Billingham combined well with fellow sub Sam Rock and he then hit a 20-yard shot that forced sub keeper Danny Lewis into a diving save away to his left.

Then from the resulting free-kick, taken quickly, the ball was fed into Billingham who turned past his man and drove to the by-line before turning the ball across the face of the goal for Dallison to see his effort loop off a visiting defender into the net for the equalising goal.

Michael Gash clears the ball off the line as Stourbridge look for an equaliser. *Picture Will Kilpatrick Photography*

Match is stopped by rain

Warwickshire First XI 72
Stourbridge First XI 6
(Match Abandoned)

STOURBRIDGE First XI skipper Richard Bradley clutched on to a get out of jail card as his team made their way to take on Coventry & North Warwickshire first XI.

The side is languishing at the bottom end of Division Two of the Birmingham and District League.

Opening up with the leg spinner Audy Alexander and the quickie Ikram Mussadaq for a speedy finish Stour made a dream of a start.

Opener Luke Reeves was trapped LBW by Mussadaq for three, Mathew Clements was caught and bowled by the same bowler for a duck, No.3 Mathew Pickering fell to Alexander caught for 10. Skipper Daniel Vernon was Mussadaq's third victim and second caught bowled for 15. Bilal Hassan and Stour continued to prosper. Hassan taking the wickets of Lasiba Chris Ngeope bowled for 19 and had Tony Bristow caught for nine.

Plan worked Coventry & North Warks six down for 72 off 25 overs. The joyous Stours skipper was in disbelieve as rain stopped play.

Hitman spot for Edwards

WOLVES midfielder Dave Edwards has been given a licence to thrill after being told he will only play in an advanced role from now on.

The Wales international has previously been used in midfield positions.

However, Kenny Jackett believes Edwards can be a real goal-threat in the Championship.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford. Thursday, July 24

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